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Spokesman Rejects Arms Treaty Violation Charges

LD0404090191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0748 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 4 Apr (TASS)—"Attempts by some Western politicians to accuse the USSR of violating the provisions of the treaty on the reduction of conventional arms and armed forces in Europe are absolutely groundless," Lieutenant General Fedor Ladygin, head of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Administration, has said. He gave an interview to our TASS correspndent today, explaining the Soviet position on this question.

Speaking about the charges made against the USSR, that it allegedly "failed to provide complete figures for its arms and armed forces in the treaty's zone of application, i.e., from the Atlantic to the Urals," Fedor Ladygin pointed out that the Soviet Union named all the arms it possessed on 19 November 1990—the date the treaty was signed. "Three months later, as was envisaged, we cited already amplified information in Vienna," the head of the administration stressed. He added that these figures could be verified with the aid of inspections.

Broaching the question of Marine and Coast Guard arms that allegedly "through the USSR's fault are not counted in the overall levels," Gen. Ladygin stressed that this did not occur through the Soviet Union's fault. "From the very beginning when the mandate was being drafted, we were insistent that not only the land troops but the naval forces too should be subject to limitations and reductions," he noted.

In the general's opinion, "the United States and some Western allies then categorically objected to this." He said that eventually the USSR agreed not to include the naval forces arms in the overall level of arms being reduced. Therefore, Fedor Ladygin believes, to say now that these arms should be included in the arms being limited "is totally incorrect and juridically unfounded." According to him, the Marines and Coast Guard forces are a component part of the Soviet naval forces. This was established before the talks began and they were always designated exclusively for the defense of the country's sea coasts.

"Since the treaty was signed, no units or subunits have been transferred from one service of our armed forces to another. I state this absolutely responsibly," Lt. Gen. Fedor Ladygin said in conclusion.

Bogachev Views Bush Comments on Arms Talks

LD0404182491 Moscow TASS in English 1753 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS military analyst Vladimir Bogachev]

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—The German newspaper BILD reported that President George Bush during a press stakeout with him on a golf course in Florida briefly touched on Soviet-American talks on arms control and said that the Soviet Union and the United States "have some difficulties" on Conventional Arms in Europe (CFE) to work out. "We've maintained that we should get a start agreement," President Bush said and added that "we've got to work out details on these arms control agreements now".

Indeed, problems did arise recently in the discussion of the conventional forces agreement not only because of different interpretations of the already agreed provisions.

Some days ago, the Warsaw Pact military structure was annulled. Henceforth, the Soviet Union will have to solve all problems of its security relying on its own forces.

But all specific cuts in troops and armaments under the CFE agreement were based on the balance of forces between the two military alliances—NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

Incidentally, under the CFE agreement, the Soviet Union was to eliminate or withdraw from Europe almost 20 times as many arms as the United States.

The Warsaw Pact no longer exists, but NATO continues to function. Moreover, the Soviet Union has begun to pull out its troops from Eastern Europe. These changes can by no means be ignored.

It is hardly advisable to review the principal provisions of the conventional forces agreement. However, the changes in the balance of strengths call for certain correctives in the implementation of the agreement. The decision on these correctives must be made at the negotiation table on a mutually acceptable basis.

One of the stumbling blocks in the implementation of the conventional forces agreement is the fate of three Soviet marine divisions. It is important to note that they were created on the basis of motorized infantry divisions before the agreement was signed. The problem of these divisions was discussed earlier but was not solved for a number of reasons. After the conventional forces agreement was signed, no Soviet units were transferred from one kind of armed forces to another.

When work first began on the mandate for talks, the Soviet Union insisted from the very beginning that not only land forces but also naval forces should be limited and cut. However, the United States and its NATO allies objected against this proposal, obviously seeking to retain the West's massive supremacy in the number of marine troops. The Gulf war made clear once again the need to take naval forces into account during the arms control talks.

President Bush's statement concerning the readiness to settle differences the two sides have in their talks and work out details on these arms control agreements obviously testifies to the fact that the White House has not lost interest in reaching an arms control agreement on a mutually acceptable basis. This inspires hope.

Security Council Gulf Resolution Detailed

LD0404092491 Moscow TASS in English 2138 GMT 3 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondents Mikhail Kochetkov and Yevgeniy Menkes]

[Text] United Nations April 4 TASS—The United Nations Security Council on Wednesday approved by a majority of votes a resolution on principles for a settlement of the Iraq-Kuwait crisis.

Twelve countries, including all the five permanent members of the council, voted in favour of the resolution. Yemen and Ecuador abstained. Only Cuba voted against.

The resolution welcomes the restoration of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait. Provision is made for a settlement of all border issues between Iraq and Kuwait, including the demarcation of the border.

The U.N. secretary-general is requested to submit within three days to the Security Council for approval a plan for the immediate deployment of a United Nations observer unit in the region.

The U.N. Security Council decided that Iraq shall unconditionally accept the destruction, removal or rendering harmless, under the international supervision, of all chemical and biological weapons as well as all ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers.

Provision is made for the formation of a special commission under the auspices of the U.N. secretary-general to monitor compliance in this respect.

The council decided that Iraq shall unconditionally agree not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons or nuclear-weapons-usable materials.

The resolution points out Iraq's responsibility for the damage inflicted upon Kuwait and other states and provides for the establishement of a mechanism to pay compensations. It was decided to set up a special fund for this purpose. Sanctions against Iraq will be lifted gradually. The Security Council reaffirmed full ban on the supply of arms to Iraq.

An offical ceasefire will take effect as soon as Iraq notifies the U.N. of its readiness to comply with the provisions of this resolution.

UN Associations Meet in Vladivostok

LD0404054391 Moscow TASS in English 1411 GMT 3 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Vadim Klimentyev]

[Text] Vladivostok April 3 TASS—Questions of security in the Asia-Pacific region and possibilities of easing tension among countries are being discussed at a meeting of U.N. associations from the USSR, China, Japan and the United States, which opened in Vladivostok.

A similar meeting had been held earlier on the initiative of the U.S. United Nations association in San Francisco. The current debates under the United Nations auspices and the active participation of the Soviet peace committee will make it possible to come up with a sizeable package of coordinated recommendations.

The participants in the news conference reported that the agenda includes such global themes as the effect of political and strategic changes in the foreign policy of the USSR and the USA on military stability in the region and the growing role of Japan and China in military stability.

The meeting will discuss tendencies in the development of rocketry forces within and outside the Asia-Pacific region and their non-proliferation to the Korean peninsula and will analyse arms control in Asia in the light of changed East-West relations.

Head of the Japanese delegation Masashi Nishihara noted the special importance of holding this meeting in Vladivostok in the run-up to the Soviet-Japanese summit and the forthcoming visit of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to Japan.

He believes that all parties, especially neighbouring countries, should achieve greater mutual understanding in the military field, and should have clear and reliable information on the matter.

He believes the Kurils should become a demilitarised zone.

The meeting is attended by representatives of the Beijing Institute of International Strategic Studies, the Institute of Oriental Culture of the University of Tokyo, the Carnegie Foundation and the International Corporation of Applied Science, heads of departments of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences and others. The meeting is planned to be concluded by April 5.

The programme of the meeting envisages a discussion with commander of the Pacific fleet of the USSR Navy Admiral Gennadiy Khvatov and a visit to a warship.

Ignatenko on Selecting Rasputin for Japan Trip

PM0504105791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Apr 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by G. Charodeyev: "Who is Going to Tokyo"]

[Excerpts] V.N. Ignatenko, assistant to the head of the Soviet state and head of his press service, held a briefing at the USSR Foreign Ministry Press Center. [passage omitted]

A correspondent for the U.S. paper VILLAGE VOICE asked: Why is the USSR president taking writer Valentin Rasputin on the trip? He has been making anti-Semitic statements again of late..."

"I don't think," the head of the president's press service said, "that the choice of people for such an important trip was made according to the who says what principle. Valentin Rasputin is an outstanding Soviet writer. This may simply have been a slip of the tongue. He is going to Japan as member of a group of public figures who are respected worldwide. The writer is representing our country as someone who is well known, as a member of the former Presidential Council." [passage omitted]

The USSR president's assistant was also asked about the price rises. "Although we have raised prices, we do not expect store shelves to fill within two days," V.N. Ignatenko said. According to him, prices rises are one way of helping to put the economic situation on an even keel, of increasing producers' commitment. After a while we will feel the effect, the president's assistant said.

CSCE Legislative Assembly Considered

LD0304171891 Moscow TASS in English 1619 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Madrid April 3 TASS—Further development of European-scale structures was in the focus of discussion at the meeting of parliamentarians of CSCE member-countries in the Madrid Palace of Congresses today

The first session of the meeting was addressed by Aleksander Dzasokhov, chairman of the Soviet parliament's International Affairs Committee, who noted that the Madrid meeting opened the way towards a qualitatively new level of interaction between countries—participants in the Helsinki process.

The call of the heads of states and governments, voiced in Paris, for creating a parliamentary dimension of the Helsinki process met with interested response in the Soviet parliament, Dzasokhov said. The creation of the CSCE parliamentary assembly is viewed in the Soviet Union as a major international action intended to facilitate the development and enrichment of the European process, as yet another step in the building of a new security system in Europe.

Aleksander Dzasokhov voiced a number of proposals concerning the formation of the assembly, its legal nature, competence and procedures.

First of all, the CSCE parliamentary forum should be an independent parliamentary structure organically complementing European-scale structures which are to be created under the agreement reached at the Paris summit.

Secondly, the assembly should have the right to consider at its session the entire range of problems which are the subject of consideration within the framework of the Helsinki process, including military-political.

Thirdly, the future assembly should make decisions by consensus on all questions of procedure or organisation, as well as on all other matters.

Fourthly, the Soviet side is ready to support the proposal for an equal minimum number of parliamentarians from each country and the provision of additional seats for each country depending on its financial contribution.

Fifth, one statutory session should be held every year. An separate decision by consensus is necessary to convene an extraordinary session.

Sixth, plenary sessions of the CSCE parliamentary assembly should be preceded by a meeting of the institute (council) of the delegation leaders.

The handling of organizational and technical matters relating to the activity of the assembly should be entrusted, according to the Soviet representative, to the assembly secretariat, comprising a small number of officials, as proposed by the Spanish and other delegations.

Reports Examine European Security, NATO Role

Adjustments Required

LD0104205991 Moscow World Service in English 1810 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Aleksandr Pogodin commentary]

[Text] The line which divided Europe between the two blocks, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, which was created six years after NATO, has been for decades the boundary of confrontation and a dangerous one at that. Both the two alliances took part in the arms race, which naturally aggravated the military threats on the continent. It is also worth recalling that in all these years the Warsaw Treaty countries constantly favored the idea of disbanding the two alliances, or, as a first step, of disbanding their military structures. And it was the Warsaw Treaty member-countries who supported the idea of holding a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the idea which, after long opposition by NATO, was realized in Helsinki in 1975. The Helsinki principles were confirmed last November in the Paris Charter for a new Europe. This document clearly defined the end of the period of confrontation and cold war and outlined practical ways for cooperation among nations and for a construction of an all-European home.

Under the new conditions, the elimination of the military structures seems quite logical, though of course for the Warsaw Treaty it was primarily prompted by the logic of those large-scale changes which had taken place in eastern Europe. This situation seems to open very favorable conditions for implementing practical steps to create a collective security system in Europe. Of course, it is possible only through joint efforts, both by NATO and by the countries which are not members of any military bloc.

NATO, however, does not even have in mind any self-disbandment. The matter only boils down to rather vague talk that the alliance's activities will gradually assume a mostly political nature. Instead, there is plentiful discussion of plans to create new military structures and to review, in accordance with the new conditions, the doctrines connected with the use of nuclear weapons. Yet I would not like to go deep into polemics. It can possibly be explained by the fact that it is hard to give up cold war stereotypes and with time the logic of the historical changes will prompt NATO too, to make reasonable political and practical conclusions. These words may seem over optimistic, but during Easter days even excessive optimism may be fully pardonable.

NATO Urged To Follow Pact Lead

LD0304133591 Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 2 Apr 91

[Vladislav Kozyakov commentary]

[Text] The six Warsaw Pact countries, including the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, wound up the Pact's military structures on Sunday. The move follows their joint decision, and now a commentary by Vladislav Kozyakov and this is what he writes:

As part of the newly emerging realities in Europe the Soviet Union is pulling its troops from Eastern Europe, including what used to be East Germany, under bilateral agreements with those countries. The overhauling of the Warsaw Pact's military structures also reflects the understanding reached between East and West, Moscow and Washington. The joint declaration adopted by 22 countries at the Paris summit conference last November speaks of a new era opening in European relations and that the countries in the continent no longer regard each other as enemies. Instead they will rebuild their relations on the basis of partnership and friendship.

As agreed in Paris, European countries, as well as the United States and Canada, sat down to create European security structures, working on the assumption that the European divide must be replaced by European unity. Sadly the process isn't an easy one. One stumbling block is caused by Washington and other NATO capitals which found themselves unprepared to reciprocate the Warsaw Pact's move. Not only do NATO military structures remain in place, but no tentative deadline was given when these will be overhauled. On the contrary, work is in progress to strengthen them. Negotiation is now underway on re-equipping the armed forces in Western Europe with advanced U.S. weapons which performed well in the Gulf War. Discussion is also being held about the possibility of using NATO's military structures outside of Europe.

The argument increasingly used is the need for maintaining a balance of forces in Europe. With the Warsaw Pact in place, NATO had always justified its existence by a military threat from the Soviet Union and its allies. In a situation such as it is now, the desire by Washington and its allies to preserve NATO for confrontation with the Soviet Union can only cause Moscow suspicions.

The process of creating European structures cannot be a one lane traffic and the Warsaw Pact's bold move must be reciprocated by a similar move from NATO. To back up the words on friendship by the Paris declaration, mutual and equitable action is needed by both sides to do away with military confrontation in Europe.

Possible NATO Changes Viewed

PM0504095591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 4 Apr 91 First Edition p 3

[Article by Major M. Zheglov: "Is NATO Changing?"]

[Text] Today in Brussels, where the NATO political and military organs are located, events will take place to mark its latest anniversary—the 42d. Much has changed in Europe over these years. The "cold war" has receded into the past, one would like to hope irreversibly. Few people now take seriously the military threat to the West from the USSR, whose troops are returning inside their national borders. The agenda now includes creating new structures for an all-European system of security to the end of bloc-based confrontation.

The chances for the start of this process today are greater than ever. The Warsaw Pact, by the common consent of its member countries, has abolished its military structures. The alliance itself now functions purely formally, fulfilling the function of a political consultative organ. Under these conditions suitable steps by NATO could switch plans to create a system of all-European security, whose outlines were sketched in the charter for a new Europe, to a purely practical plane.

At first glance, NATO also understands this. At any rate, the statement made by the bloc's secretary general, M. Woerner, on the occasion of CSFR President V. Havel's visit to the NATO headquarters said frankly that "security and stability cannot be ensured merely by military means. That is why the alliance is adapting to the fundamentally new conditions of security and is strengthening its political aspect."

The words would seem to be correct but are not backed up by any specific deeds. For instance, for a long time discussions have been under way in NATO about the need to elaborate a new strategy toreplace the strategy of "defense on forward borders" and "flexible response." The allies voiced the utmost readiness to adopt it by the summer at a new summit meeting. Now they are talking of deferring this meeting to the end of this year. Where are the guarantees that this process will not be dragged out for a long time?

Nor are there confirmations of the assurances that the emphasis will be shifted in NATO's activity away from the military and toward the political. They are finding numerous arguments not to hurry. There is allegedly the

possibility of the emergence of armed conflicts like the Iraq-Kuwait conflict. The instability and unpredictability of the situation in the Soviet Union. The possibility of the long-term covert resurrection of the military might of the reunited Germany. The spread of nuclear weapons and missile technology among the "third world" countries, and so forth. In brief, it is a case of the presence of an allegedly multifarious threat to European security. Allegedly only the NATO bloc can cope with it, control it, and prevent the violation of stability and security. With, naturally, the assistance of an all-bloc military component.

In the expatiations of the NATO political and military leaders in this connection one can discern increasingly clearly the perturbing line toward the globalization of NATO military might. The fact that a number of NATO states' armed forces joined the multinational grouping that fought in the Persian Gulf region has poured oil on the fire of the discussions that were already under way in NATO on the need to expand the zone of the alliance's operations beyond the limits of the treaty's sphere of responsibility. That is there is talk of how NATO troops, in the event of a positive solution to this question, may be moved to regions a long way from Europe. It is no accident that a number of the bloc's capitals are discussing extensively the possibilities of forming for this purpose new rapid deployment forces whose numbers could reach several hundred thousand servicemen.

This development of events in NATO is not ruled out. Yet the question of safeguarding the security of the Soviet Union under what would be new conditions is then natural. That should not be forgotten by those people in NATO who are fighting for the buildup of military efforts and the expansion of the bloc's zone of "responsibility."

Post-Gulf U.S.-Soviet Ties Viewed

PM0404151891 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 11, 17-24 Mar 91 p 3

[Andrey Kortunov article: "USSR-USA: Tested by Crisis"]

[Text] The Gulf war has drawn public attention to the future of Soviet-American relations. Talk of their "fragility", of a "freeze" or "pause" in the dialogue, has not been caused by the war alone. One should not forget the emergence of problems with the Paris accords, the negotiations on strategic arms, and the continuing uncertainty of the Baltic situation. However, it is the Gulf crisis that has proved to be the most serious test for both countries in recent years, at least psychologically.

In the Soviet Union, anti-American forces prepared to see Pentagon intrigue behind every world problem have become more active. In the United States, there is talk of Moscow not being worthy of trust, about Gorbachev, like his predecessors, "playing a double game" while Soviet-American confrontation in the Third World continues.

In my opinion there is no reason for panic so far. The right-wing forces on both sides are in the minority and not ready for a decisive counteroffensive. Nonetheless, both the Kremlin and the White House would do well to draw some important conclusions.

First, the Gulf crisis has shown that Soviet and American interests in the region (as well as other regions) are similar but by no means identical. The differences lie not only in the systems of alliance, but also in aims and priorities, as well as the concept of a reliable and just settlement. There is nothing dramatic about the differences, though, provided neither side seeks to use them to strengthen its position in the region at the expense of the other side.

Second, the crisis has once again demonstrated both leaders' dependence on the domestic situation in the USSR and the USA. For the American President, such dependence is nothing new, while for the Soviet President it is the direct result of democratic changes in recent years. Today Mikhail Gorbachev can agree to cooperate with the Americans only where he has the support of a society which is far from homogeneous. Too marked a departure from the dominant social sentiment is fraught with risks the Soviet leader cannot afford to take.

Finally, the crisis is bound to sober up those who had hoped the USSR and the USA would be able, after the Cold War, to shake off the burden of global responsibilities and pass them on to others, e.g., the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the European Community, etc. Diplomacy in general and multilateral diplomacy in particular can do a lot, but not everything. The balance of strength on the regional and global scale will go on dominating the balance of interests. Consequently, the importance of Soviet-American relations as the regulator of world politics will for the most part remain unchanged, be it a question of setting up regional security systems or curbing international munitions trade.

To sum up, although the Gulf crisis has given no cause for panic, one cannot say there is no grounds for concern. Regarding the Gulf crisis as a link in the chain of events since last September (negotiations problems, Shevardnadze's resignation, an increased Soviet military budget, a toughening of official rhetoric, a postponement of the summit) rather than an isolated phenomenon, one can't help concluding that the honeymoon in Soviet-American relations is over.

It can be supposed that the forthcoming meeting between Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and James Baker, despite optimistic predictions by all, might turn out rather cold. The foreign ministers are to discuss not only prospects for a Gulf settlement, which in itself is a source of possible serious disagreement, but also to return to the still unresolved and extremely painful problems of disarmament.

Nor can the possibility of the Baltic issue being reopened by the Americans be excluded. The time-out granted to

the USSR President by the Gulf war is drawing to an end. Last but not least, the new Soviet Foreign Minister has yet to build up an atmosphere of understanding and trust in his personal relationship with the US Secretary of State. In short, the problems are many and hopes for speedy headway are few.

To prevent regression to confrontation, Soviet policy with regard to the United States must be honest. One cannot sign agreements with one hand and transfer tanks to areas beyond the Urals with the other. Second, our policy must be consistent. It is no good pledging full support to the coalition objectives today, and saying full responsibility for military action must be incumbent on the USA tomorrow. Third, our policy must be coherent and unambiguous. It appears incongruous when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' statements differ from those emanating from the President's office.

Honest, consistent and unambiguous policies are sure to be appreciated by both the Americans and our own society.

'Roundtable' on Lenin Legacy Ends 27 March

PM0204152991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Mar 91 Second Edition p 2

[F. Belelyubskiy report: "Dialectic Lives On"]

[Text] The international "roundtable" on "Lenin and the 20th Century," organized by the NOVOSTI news agency, completed its three-day work 27 March. Well-known historians and political experts from many foreign states and our compatriots participated in the discussion.

The introductory speech was delivered by A. Dzasokhov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee, member of the Politburo, and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Objectively evaluating the significance of V.I. Lenin's spiritual legacy for the future fate of civilization, A. Dzasokhov pointed out, Soviet social scientists are very far from defending this legacy from canonical positions. In our time of freedom of creative thought we can hardly fail to notice the features of a certain euphoria in assessing the pace of the switch to the new social formation—features characteristic of Lenin's generation of revolutionary figures. Lenin does not and cannot have direct answers to all the questions that perturb us today. On the other hand, the dialectic of his intellect and the very fine methodology for analyzing social life live on.

The attention of those assembled was focused on central problems of the history of the shaping of Lenin's ideas and their contemporary significance. The discussion commenced with the most topical subject—an analysis of the package of Lenin's principles for building a socialist society, which he formulated after the end of the Civil War. Participating in the discussion of the problem, in addition to Soviet scientists Yu. Polyakov, V. Naumov, and V. Lelchuk, was Chen Zhihua, Chinese historian of the USSR. N. Simoniya noted the role of state capitalism as a failed alternative to the barrack-room communist interpretation of socialism.

The foreign guests were particularly active in discussing the relationship between V.I. Lenin's ideological legacy and I.V. Stalin's sociopolitical position. Here are some typical subjects of the reports: "Was Lenin to Blame for Stalinism?" (W. Leonhard, FRG) and "Lenin, Stalin, and Czarism" (R. Tucker, United States). "Lenin Against Stalin: A Lost Battle?"—this was the title of the speech by Soviet scientist A. Sakharov. Almost all participants in the "roundtable" joined in the debate: R. Pipes (United States), V. Loginov, and others.

The third "block" of problems—Lenin on the nationalities question and national movements—was touched on in speeches by Mexican guest J. Lopez y Rivas, Azerbaijan representative A. Dazhdamirov, and Estonian representative K. Hallik.

The history of the shaping of Lenin's concept of revolution was examined separately. The main stages of its history were covered in reports by French scientist K. Ingerflom [name as transliterated] and our specialists A. Butenko, V. Shelokhayev, and G. Sobolev.

In conclusion there was a review of the sociopolitical aspects of Lenin's legacy. Great interest was aroused by the reports by N. Harding (Britain), Nobuo Shimotomai (Japan), M. Ferro (France), M. Goldman (United States), G. Boffa (Italy), and K. Ayer [name as transliterated] (India).

United States & Canada

Bush 'Firmly Denied' Reports on June Summit

PM0404155591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Union Edition p 1

[Item from roundup of TASS, RIA, POSTFAKTUM, INTERFAX, and REUTER reports: "G. Bush on the Meeting With M. Gorbachev"]

[Text] U.S. President G. Bush declared that he would like to meet President M. Gorbachev and would like to travel to Moscow, but at the same time he firmly denied reports that the next Soviet-U.S. summit meeting could supposedly be held as early as next June in Berlin. Reports to this effect have appeared in the German newspaper BILD. Bush said that the USSR and the United States still have to settle a series of difficulties in the elaboration of the Treaty on Conventional Arms in Eruope and the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms.

Northeast Asia

Gorbachev Reportedly Not To Visit South Korea

OW0404132991 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1255 GMT 4 Apr 91

[From "NHK News 21" program]

[Text] There has been speculation that President Gorbachev might visit South Korea before or after his visit to Japan on 16 April. However, the Soviet Union formally notified the South Korean Government today that the president has no plans to visit South Korea.

Rogachev Warns Against ROK Joining UN 'Hastily'

LD0404180191 Moscow TASS in English 1734 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Dmitriy Bandura]

[Text] Tokyo April 4 TASS—Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev today called for a dialogue between the Soviet Union and countries in the Asia-Pacific region aimed to create a new international order in the region.

According to the YONHAP News Agency, in an address to participants in the session of the economic and social commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Rogachev noted the Soviet Union's readiness to search for the region's specific road to strengthening peace and cooperation.

The Soviet diplomat said a new system of mutual relations should include additional guarantees for a peaceful solution of problems.

A search for common approaches and decisions persistently demands that there existed a dialogue, including at the top level. Such a dialogue becoming a stable process could lead to the creation of an effective infrastructure for talks, Rogachev said.

Rogachev said other social problems of the region included poverty, rapid growth of the population, uneven distribution of profits and environmental pollution.

Over 1,000 delegates from 48 states and 70 international organisations are attending the ESCAP session held in the South Korean capital for the first time ever.

Addressing a news conference today, Rogachev warned South Korea against joining the United Nations hastily and unilaterally. The decision on the issue should be worked out in a dialogue between North and South Koreas.

A dialogue between the two countries could lead to lessening tension on the Korean peninsula, Rogachev said.

Japanese Official Cited on Gorbachev Visit

IZVESTIYA Notes Comment

PM0404161391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Union Edition p 1

[Item from roundup of TASS, RIA, POSTFAKTUM, INTERFAX, and REUTER reports: "Soviet-Japanese Relations"]

[Text] Japan's Deputy Foreign Minister Kuriyama declared in an interview with KYODO, devoted to the USSR president's forthcoming visit to Japan: "The USSR has serious intentions as regards the need to conclude a peace treaty. A favorable situation prevails. And if the USSR clearly demonstrates that it has not lost the desire to resolve the territorial question, new prospects will no doubt appear in the sphere of economic cooperation." "The Japanese Government does not look upon economic cooperation as compensation for the 'Northern Territories,'" Kuriyama emphasized, "it is important that these questions be tackled simultaneously."

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on Comments

PM0504124591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 5 Apr 91 First Edition p 3

[TASS report: "Japanese Foreign Ministry's Position"]

[Text] Tokyo, 4 Apr—"The Soviet Union is serious about the need to conclude a peace treaty. A favorable situation has taken shape for this." This was stated by Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister T. Kuriyama in an interview with the KYODO news agency devoted to the USSR president's forthcoming visit to Tokyo.

Dwelling on the interconnection between political and economics in Japanese-Soviet relations, T. Kuriyama

noted that "new prospects will undoubtedly open up in the sphere of economic cooperation if the Soviet Union clearly demonstrates that it has not lost its desire to resolve the territorial question."

He also described as "futile" the disputes in Japan about what should happen first—whether the southern Kuril Islands should be handed over to it or whether full-scale economic relations should be established with the USSR. It is important to tackle these questions simultaneously, the diplomat stressed.

The official position of "not dividing politics and economics" to which Tokyo adheres provides for linkage between state encouragement for extensive Japanese-Soviet economic relations and the satisfaction of Japan's territorial claims on the USSR. But the concept adopted in recent years by the Japanese Government implies that the development of cooperation with the USSR depends on advances in resolving the territorial question rather than on the definitive settlement of Japanese claims.

Expressing this viewpoint, T. Kuriyama pointed out that the Japanese Government does not view economic cooperation as "compensation" for the "northern territories."

Southeast Asia & Pacific

IZVESTIYA on Lukyanov-Le Quang Dao Talks

PM0404144591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Apr 91 Union Edition p 4

[TASS report: "Exchange Of Opinions"]

[Text] On 2 April A.I. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, met in the Kremlin with a Vietnamese legislative delegation headed by Le Quang Dao, chairman of the SRV National Assembly, which is on a visit to the Soviet Union.

During a detailed discussion of the work of the Soviet and Vietnamese supreme representative organs of power in providing legislation for the processes of the renewal of society the mutual opinion was expressed that, in conditions of the growing role of our countries' parliaments in the solution of cardinal problems of public life, wider opportunities are opening up for the enrichment of their cooperation.

Lukyanov stressed that the Soviet Union deems it important to preserve and augment the accumulated valuable potential for cooperation in all spheres.

Near East & South Asia

Syrian Foreign Minister Pays Working Visit

Arrives 3 April

LD0304174791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1650 GMT 3 Apr 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 3 Apr (TASS)—Faruq al-Shar', foreign affairs minister for the Syrian Arab Republic, arrived in the Soviet Union on a short working visit this evening.

Talks between Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, the USSR foreign minister, and Faruq al-Shar', the Syrian foreign minister, will be held in Moscow tomorrow.

It is proposed that Faruq al-Shar' will be received by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Questions of bilateral Soviet-Syrian relations and a wide range of international problems, in particular the situation in the Persian Gulf, will be touched upon during the forthcoming talks.

Meets With Bessmertnykh

LD0404192191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1748 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow, 4 Apr (TASS)—USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh held talks today with Faruq al-Shar', foreign minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, who was in Moscow on a one-day working visit.

The problems of the postcrisis arrangement in the Persian Gulf region and of a settlement of the situation in the Middle East as a whole were discussed. The sides' views on the future of that region coincide. The overcoming of the Kuwait crisis, in the course of which the international community showed unprecedented mutual understanding and interaction, creates a new situation in the Middle East which provides an historic chance to reconcile its peoples.

The ministers expressed the conviction that the time has come for the international community, and especially for the countries of the region, to tackle in practical terms the task of arranging a Middle East peace process. While considering the summoning of an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict—the most effective path to peace—at the same time, the Soviet Union and Syria do not belittle the importance of preparatory steps. The job of starting things off could be filled by contacts and consultations in various formats, including within the framework of the UN Security Council.

The positions of the sides also proved to be very close in respect to the creation of a regional security system in the Persian Gulf zone, within which both interested countries in the region and also states not directly related to it but striving to make a contribution to the maintenance of stability there would interact. The sides proceed on the basis that Iraq must remain a territorially integral state and occupy the place belonging to it in the system of interstate relations in the region.

The ministers expressed satisfaction after a discussion of the state of and prospects for the development of bilateral Soviet- Syrian relations.

Joint interest was expressed in making progress in all spheres of cooperation between the USSR and the Syrian Arab Republic. It was decided to pay special attention to deepening the political dialouge and interaction between the two sides, above all in Near East affairs.

Bessmertnykh Assesses Talks

LD0404153991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1421 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 4 Apr (TASS)—Talks were completed at the USSR Foreign Ministry guesthouse today between USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and Faruq al-Shar', foreign minister of the Syrian Arab Republic. He arrived in Moscow on Wednesday on a short working visit.

In an interview with a TASS correspondent immediately after the talks ended, USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said that they discussed Soviet-Syrian relations, the post-crisis situation in the Persian Gulf and the problem of overall Near East settlement.

On the subject of the state of and prospects for Soviet-Syrian relations in political, economic, and other fields, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh noted that "progress has been achieved". He pointed to the possibility of achieving deeper relations between the Soviet Union and Syria.

Aleksandr Bessmertnykh stated that particular attention was devoted to the post-crisis situation in the Persian Gulf and the creation of a security system in the region, including from the perspective of the recently-adopted UN Security Council resolution.

"On these problems there is much in the Soviet side's position which coincides with Syria's," said the USSR foreign minister. He noted that the Soviet Union backs the Syrian side's constructive position on the creation of a security system in the region, one which "is not a closed system but allows for the possibility of other states' participation."

The problem of the military presence of states from other regions in the Persian Gulf was also discussed. The Soviet minister noted that "the crisis in the Gulf should not serve as a reason for the military element to grow excessively". In Aleksandr Bessmertnykh's opinion evolution toward a reasonable variant for resolving the problem will be observed in the future.

According to the minister, both sides think that, paradoxical as it may seem, the crisis in the Gulf is opening up additional opportunities to work on a Near East settlement more rapidly. "From this point of view," said Aleksandr Bessmertnykh," a great deal depends on the positions of the Near East states, of the other major powers, and on the way that Israel behaves." In the course of the talks the prospects were discussed for the practical implementation of a plan relating to the settlement process.

Assessing Soviet-Syrian relations, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh noted that they are key ones from the standpoint of seeking ways to a Near East settlement. They have their own rich traditions and at the present moment the sides are experiencing a need to exchange opinions and compare positions. "The role of Soviet-Syrian cooperation in the matter of finding ways to achieve a settlement in the Near East has seriously grown," he said.

Describing the Syrian minister's visit as a whole, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said that it was very timely, useful, and constructive.

Bessmertnykh Statement to SANA

NC0404200691 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1720 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow, 4 April (SANA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh made an exclusive statement to the SANA correspondent in Moscow in which he said that his talks today with Faruq al-Shar' were fruitful and intensive and will provide a new impetus to the progress of bilateral ties.

Speaking after the talks, Bessmertnykh said that they covered bilateral relations and involved an assessment of their current course and future development in various political, economic, and technological fields, with the goal of reaching a common understanding of the what both sides should do.

The Soviet foreign minister said there was a good basis and a solid foundation for Soviet-Syrian relations and added that the talks provided a new stimulus for improving them.

The Soviet foreign minister said: The second topic we discussed was the situation in the Gulf and the basis of the security system in that region in light of the recent UN Security Council resolution. There are many points of agreement between the Soviet Union and the Syrian brothers and we have no disagreement concerning the security system.

The Soviet foreign minister also expressed Soviet satisfaction with and support for the idea of the security system contained in the Damascus Declaration, noting that the system is not a closed one and that the door is open for other countries to join it. This is a matter that we are satisfied with and support.

Bessmertnykh said that the foreign military presence in the Gulf region is a temporary matter and that the forces involved will be withdrawn from the region. He said he had discussed this with U.S. Secretary of States James Baker.

Bessmertnykh said that the third topic discussed during the talks concerned the settlement of the Middle East crisis. He said that the Soviet and Syrian sides believe that the recent events in the Gulf region open new horizons and possibilities for accelerating the settlement of the Middle East problem.

Bessmertnykh said that both sides went into the details of these topics and all other possibilities. He added: We understand that much in this regard depends on the positions of the great powers and Israel. We have made an assessment of our capabilities in this regard.

Concerning the meeting of Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Bessmertnykh said the meeting was fruitful and intensive and that it helped to form a better picture of the events in the Middle East. The meeting involved an assessment of the Soviet-Syrian relations and the ways to further them.

The Soviet minister underlined the importance of Soviet-Syrian relations in the current situation. He said these relations have a pivotal and basic role in resolving the crisis in the region, because both the Soviet Union and friendly Syria share common perceptions and are acting upon the same principles. The minister concluded by saying that Soviet-Syrian cooperation has been given a great impetus to move forward.

Gorbachev Meets al-Shar'

CM0504101591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Second Edition p 1

[TASS Report: "Talks Held"]

[Text] On 4 April President Mikhail Gorbachev met Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's envoy, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Their conversation focussed on aspects of the post-war settlement in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East as a whole. In this context, they also discussed the roles of Syria and the Soviet Union as well as their interaction.

The exchange of views has confirmed that the sides do not differ on key approaches to the settlement and revival of this region which is of the greatest importance for the world community.

Mikhail Gorbachev praised president Hafiz al-Asad's stance and activity during the crisis and after. He expressed confidence that Syrian initiatives would contribute very much to the restoration of Arab unity and for the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in the spirit of realism and taking into account different converging interests in the region.

The Soviet president expressed his conviction that a true settlement and peace in the Middle and Near East would profit from easing military tension and the reduction of the level of military confrontation and the end of the arms race.

He confirmed the immutable Soviet position, calling for the elimination of chemical weapons and pointing to the inadmissibility of possession of nuclear arms in the region.

The Soviet leader repeatedly stressed the idea that Iraq must take part in the process of the settlement and that the Iraqi people, which suffered so severely because of the war, must not be placed in a position in which it would continue to pay for the faults of the regime.

He confirmed the Soviet determination to develop relations of friendly cooperation with Syria along all lines, including the defence sphere, taking into account, of course, the new international situation and the presently restricted possibilities of the Soviet economy.

The Soviet president asked al-Shar' to convey his comradely greetings and best wishes to his friend President Hafiz al-Asad and said he favored a personal meeting with him soon.

A.A. Bessmertnykh, M. Wahbah, and Ambassador M. I. al-Na'ib took part.

Damascus Reports Moscow Talks

NC0404212091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Syrian-Soviet talks between Foreign Minister Faruq al- Shar' and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh concluded today.

During the second round of talks, the two ministers completed their discussion of the subjects raised during al-Shar's meeting with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Their views were in agreement on the need to achieve progress in settling the Middle East crisis on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338 and within the framework of a UN-sponsored international peace conference.

The situation in the Gulf was also discussed. Emphasis was placed on the need to preserve Iraqi territorial integrity and to differentiate—in light of the latest UN resolution—between the Iraqi regime, which is responsible for the destruction and suffering inflicted on Iraq and Kuwait, and the Iraqi people and their efforts to achieve their political and social choices.

Concerning bilateral relations, the two sides expressed their common desire to bolster and develop them in all fields. They agreed to continue and intensify contacts and meetings to serve peace and security in the region.

Al-Shar' Departs

LD0404154791 Moscow TASS in English 1529 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Postanagov]

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' left the Soviet capital today after paying a short working visit to the Soviet Union.

During his stay in Moscow he was received by Soviet President Gorbachev and held talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh.

The sides discussed at the talks bilateral Soviet-Syrian relations, a post-crisis situation in the Persian Gulf and the problem of the overall Middle East settlement.

Assessing the visit of the Syrian foreign minister to the Soviet Union, his Soviet counterpart Bessmertnykh pointed out that it was "very timely, useful and constructive."

Official Assesses UN Resolution on Gulf

LD0404165191 Moscow TASS in English 1552 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Aleksandr Kanishchev]

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—After several days of discussions, the U.N. Security Council on Thursday managed to pass a "mutually acceptable text of the 14th resolution on a Gulf settlement, corresponding to recognised international norms", head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's International Organisations Department Sergey Lavrov told a briefing here today.

Assessing the resolution, Lavrov said he was satisfied with the document expected to draw the final line under the Gulf war and promote establishing peace and stability in the region and the Middle East as a whole.

Lavrov said the Soviet Union attaches principal importance to provisions of the resolution, concerning converting a temporary truce into a permanent ceasefire and those creating conditions for pulling out multinational forces.

The Soviet Union also welcomes the Security Council being empowered to guarantee inviolability of borders between Iraq and Kuwait, Lavrov said.

The spokesman particularly noted the humanitarian aspect of the resolution. He said the resolution "allows to begin without delay" broader deliveries of food, medicines and other basic goods for the Iraqi civil population.

It is equally important that the adoption of the resolution creates necessary conditions for restoring normal economic ties in the region, overcoming the grave aftermath of the ecological disaster and compensating losses to Kuwait and its people.

"We proceed from the notion that after the document is approved, detailed elaboration of all issues connected with technical aspects and financial realisation should follow," Lavrov said.

"Naturally, we all believe that the Iraqi leadership will agree to cooperate with the Security Council in implementing the resolution. We are convinced that it would promote strengthening Iraq's territorial integrity and restoring its economy and open the road to a stable settlement in the region in the interest of its countries and peoples," Lavrov said.

Lavrov said the state of Kurds in Iraq was not raised in the resolution. At the same time, he noted that the Kurdish issue "causes anxiety in many countries". A statement adopted on behalf of the U.N. secretry-general, expressed concern over its humanitarian aspects. Lavrov did not exclude the possibility that the discussion of the Kurdish issue will continue.

Speaking about the problem of eliminating Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, Lavrov said the resolution considered the problem as the first step towards creating a zone in the region free from such weapons. He noted that the Soviet Union supports the idea of creating such a zone and believes that the resolution should initiate the realisation of the idea.

Iraq's Civil War, Husayn's Survival Viewed

91UF0603A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 13, 3 Apr 91 p 4

["Viewpoint" by Georgiy Mirskiy, doctor of historical sciences: "Blood-Stained Iraq"]

[Text] When Iraq attacked Kuwait on 2 August last year it was clear that Saddam Husayn had committed, in our traditional language, an historic crime against mankind. He had created a situation which could not have a good outcome: The choice was only between bad and very bad. The greatest evil would have been the unpunished annexation of Kuwait and the disappearance from the world map of a sovereign state. This did not happen, and the coalition formed in accordance with the wishes of the United Nations restored Kuwait's independence. But force had to be employed for this, and what happened may be called the lesser evil, but also an evil: war, human losses, the destruction of the economy of what was just recently a flourishing state. And whereas the land battle, which lasted only 100 hours, was the "most lightning fast" of all known blitzkriegs in history, the catastrophic consequences of the war in the Gulf are only just beginning to emerge.

Iraq, as a state, has not simply been smashed and partially occupied but also humiliated. Thanks to the criminal ambitions and folly of the Baghdad dictator, a country which was considered one of the wealthiest and most promising in the Arab world lies helplessly in ruins at the feet of the victors and will evidently be forced to accept an unprecedented demand of the Security Council—the elimination within 90 days of all its chemical weapons and all its missiles. This is right, but there is something else that is far worse: The Iraqi people, who are paying for the vices and crimes of the ruling Ba'th Party, are confronted with a catastrophe unparalleled in their country's long and bloody history. The economy has been crippled, the amounts of the probable reparations are unimaginable, the food situation is appalling, people face starvation and epidemics and, most dreadful of all, thousands of people are perishing from the bombs and missiles of their own army. Since the war's end even the number of casualties among the peaceful population

has exceeded the losses sustained in the whole period of the military operations against the multinational coalition. A second war is going on in Iraq—an internal war which is acquiring the features of genocide.

It began with an uprising in the south; Shi'ites, constituting three-fifths of Iraq's population, have risen up against the regime. The clandestine ad-Daawa Shi'ite organization, of a pro-Iran orientation, is in the vanguard of the uprising. Iran, naturally, would welcome the creation in Iraq of an Islamic republic with a Shi'ite leadership, and there is information concerning Iranian help for the insurgents, but Tehran cannot bring itself to intervene officially in Iraq's troubles. In this case the way would be open for Turkey's interference in the events occurring in northern Iraq—with unpredictable consequences. In addition, Iran's siding openly with the Iraqi Shi'ites would have a boomerang effect among the Iraqi Sunnis, would lead to an upsurge in "anti-Persian" sentiment in Iraq, very strong following the recent Iran-Iraq war, and would objectively work in favor of Saddam Husayn.

The point is that since the times even when the territory of present-day Iraq was controlled by the Turks (and they are, as is known, Sunnis) the administrative machinery and the armed forces in Iraq have been firmly monopolized by Sunnis under all regimes, and a Sunni-Shi'ite confrontation now would altogether destroy the state, and the chances of the Shi'ites coming to power in Baghdad are minimal, what is more. Tehran understands this, which explains the Iranian authorities' guarded position. This also explains to a considerable extent the fact that both the political and military leadership in Baghdad still supports Saddam Husayn, despite the disgraceful fiasco in the war with the coalition, for which he is to blame. Party and state functionaries obviously fear that the fall of Saddam would signify their end also—the triumph of the Shi'ites and the collapse of the state. For this reason Saddam is still holding on, although he will hardly retain power for long. Meanwhile, however, availing himself of the regular army's tremendous superiority to the insurgents in equipment, he has been able, in the main, to put down the Shi'ite uprising in the south.

Things are shaping up differently in the north, in Kurdistan. The Kurds (approximately one-fifth of Iraq's population) have long and selflessly, but unsuccessfully been fighting a war against Baghdad for independence or, at least, real autonomy. Their uprisings have been suppressed by the Iraqi Army with rare brutality. But now, taking advantage of the confusion and decline in the Army's morale, Kurdish "Pesh Merga" ("Not Afraid To Die") fighters, have quickly established control over a large part of their territory.

In recent days Saddam has transferred troops and equipment to the north, intending to crush the Kurdish guerrillas at all costs and bring Kurdistan to heel. He has succeeded in retaking Kirkuk. Army helicopters are sowing death and destruction, and masses of peaceful inhabitants are being killed. But the mainstay of the insurgents is not the cities but rural localities, which the authorities will hardly succeed in pacifying now. True, the fact that neighboring Turkey, which has its own large and restive Kurdish population, has no interest in a victory for the Iraqi Kurds, is to Saddam's benefit. As far as the Americans are concerned, they evidently have no definite policy line. In any event, yet another "Islamic republic" seems to them, most likely, an even greater evil than the hopelessly weakened Saddam regime. But time is passing, blood is being spilled....

Continued Ties With Arab Regimes Urged

91UF0594A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 28 Mar 91 p 3

[Article by Aleksandr Smirnov, candidate of historical sciences: "Not To Lose What Has Been Acquired"]

[Text] Moscow—**Are our "democrats" interested in the USSR maintaining good-neighbor relations with the Arab world?**

Coverage in the Soviet press of the crisis and war in the Persian Gulf and the commentaries on this topic have exposed a wide spread of opinions among journalists and political scientists on the question of Soviet-Arab relations.

I have been following closely, specifically, the material of such a respectable and respected publication as LITERATURNAYA GAZETA and have distressfully to observe that it has been unable to avoid a certain partiality in the interpretation of this problem. This also applies to USSR People's Deputy F. Burlatskiy, chief editor of the newspaper. He even threatened in one of his articles some time ago to expose to the light of day those who had "inveigled" us into ambiguous, in his view, relations with certain Arab regimes. From the start of the military operations against Iraq Fedor Mikhaylovich directly fingered Dmitriy Shepilov as the one to blame for the repainting of "dictatorial" and "semi-fascist" regimes even into states of a socialist orientation.

It is not that long since the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Agency had to apologize for the fact that Andrey Bitov considered it possible in LITERATURNAYA GAZETA to quote in its entirety an indecent short verse wounding deceased Egyptian President Gamal 'Abd Al-Nasir. And now we have the newspaper's chief editor quoting that same short verse.

Was Nasir a "semi-fascist" and dictator in the real meaning of these words? Yes, communists and members of other organizations of the left opposed to the policy of the regime on certain issues were arrested under him, particularly in 1958-1959. Nasir inherited many jailed communists from the royal regime. But it should be said for fairness' sake that there were no executions of communists in G.'A. Nasir's Egypt. It was worse for reactionaries from the Muslim Brotherhood organization: Some of them ended up on the gallows. At the start of the

1960's many prominent communist intellectuals were released and moved straight from prison cells into the chairs of Egyptian Government advisers and even into ministerial office.

Following the humiliating defeat in 1967, the criminal negligence and direct treachery even of a number of Egypt's top military officials were revealed. Any other regime would have executed those principally responsible for the defeat or have put them behind bars for a long time, at least. The Egyptian president, on the other hand, did not sign a single death warrant.

The fact that the Soviet Union's broad outlet to the Arab world and the developing countries as a whole occurred precisely in the highly promising period of the Khrushchev "thaw" in the Soviet Union, which coincided with an era of social and economic upturn in the Arab world, is profoundly symbolic. Throughout the development of Soviet-Arab relations the Soviet Union did not impose on the Arabs a single regime or ruler. Moscow was not involved in a single military coup in the region. The USSR did not land its forces and did not even have military bases there in the full sense of the word.

It is paradoxical that F. Burlatskiy's desire to dissociate himself from a whole number of Arab governments is somehow reminiscent of the policy of our deceased dictator Iosif Stalin toward the Arab world. It was under Stalin back at the end of the 1930's that the then numerous diplomatic missions in the Arab world were closed, that following World War II the development of relations with Arab countries were artificially held back, that Arab leaders at that time were crudely abused by the central press, sometimes being called agents of one or several Western imperialisms simultaneously, at other times, feudal lords, "compradors," and so forth, that an unbalanced pro-Zionist and pro-Israel position in respect of the events in Palestine was adopted, that Islam was attacked....

I would not view the problems of human rights and democracy in Arab and Muslim countries exclusively through the prism of Western-type liberalism. Both Arab and Islamic political thought have their own concepts of these matters which do not necessarily coincide with the opinion of Western political scientists or Soviet philosophers. Nor should responsibility for the "cultivation" of the Saddam Husayn regime or some other government with an awkward reputation be heaped on Soviet diplomacy and foreign policy either. Whoever thinks this way holds too high an opinion of the capabilities of Soviet diplomacy in the era of stagnation. At the start of the 1970's, for example, the Soviet Union had a mass of influential Egyptian politicians, military figures, and leaders of the security services even who were disposed to be friendly toward it. But none of the seemingly strong positions of the Soviet Union in Cairo at that time prevented a strengthening of the power and pro-America policy of Anwar al-Sadat. No, the role of the external factor in the East should not be exaggerated.

The authoritarian style of Saddam Husayn's rule on the one hand has a certain connection with the general distortion and deformation of democratic processes in the Arab world because of the unresolved nature from the very outset of the national problem of the Palestinian people, which has long been of an all-Arab nature. On the other hand, it is connected with the milleniums-long traditions of the "strict," frequently tyrannical rule of a majority of tsars, caliphs, kings, and presidents who have come to power in Mesopotamia.

The calls heard from time to time for a virtual break with some Arab leaders and the leaders of the PLO contrast oddly with the aspiration of the NATO countries even to have an active policy in the Near East. And their own policy, what is more, differs from American policy in a number of important aspects.

For example, France, while remaining an active NATO member and staying within the framework of Western Christian civilization, is now attempting to shore up its prestige in the Arab world and is putting forward peace initiatives including those emanating from the close linkage of the Palestinian and Iraq-Kuwait problems. However, as far as Soviet diplomacy in the Near East is concerned, it was for a certain time, right up to the end of 1990, deprived of its own character, as it were.

Recent events have shown that Moscow has once again returned to an active and independent policy in the 200 million-strong Arab world. Nor are other countries all that pleased by the dangerous prospect of the hegemony of one superpower in this region, which was the cradle of human civilization and is of vital significance for the majority of states. The Soviet Union has considerable positive political and humanitarian capital in the Arab world. So why advocate now some distancing from this region and its peoples, who harbor the friendliest feelings toward our country?

Sub-Saharan Africa

U.S. Administration Thanked for Eritrea Release

PM0404162191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[N. Burbyga report: "Three Years in Captivity"]

[Text] The Soviet military specialists taken captive by Eritrean separatists in 1988 have returned to the motherland.

Yesterday, in a report entitled "Hangover from a Foreign War" (IZVESTIYA No 75, 1991), we reported that an aircraft was to fly from Khartoum to Moscow 29 March with unusual passengers: Lieutenant Colonel Ye. Churayev, Lt. Col. Yu. Kalistratov, and Senior Lt. A. Kuvaldin.

The aircraft from Khartoum landed at the appointed time. The first steps on native soil. A welcome, embraces, tears... And then quite a short news conference.

"Our treatment was humane, you could say. We had newspapers: IZVESTIYA, PRAVDA, and the magazine OGONEK. So we are roughly familiar with the situation in the country," Lt. Col. Ye. Churayev said. "We also received letters. I personally received four..."

Despite an accord reached with the leaders of the EPLF [Eritrean People's Liberation Front] on the handover of letters to the Soviet officers, that promise was not always carried out. Either a letter was written on a sheet of graph paper and struck the local censors as suspicious, or a child could not have written in such complex language, or the word mother-in-law was used very frequently in the text. So, if a letter was laconic, they would hand it over, EPLF representatives replied to Soviet diplomats.

"They were all held against their will," Major General V. Pukhov said. "They behaved worthily in captivity. And they responded with refusal to all the separatists' proposals for cooperation. We have always valued honor and courage. So they will be continuing in the service. But first they will be granted leave and be offered family sanatorium warrants."

We were already on the point of returning to the editorial office when we were approached by V. Tokin, deputy chief of the USSR Foreign Ministry African Countries Administration, who took a very active part in securing the officers' release. He asked us, through the newspaper, to thank the U.S. Administration, which had helped to free our people, and also to express appreciation to the leadership of Sudan for its understanding and its readiness to cooperate. We readily do so.

Petrovskiy Receives Envoys on Eve of Visits

LD0404152391 Moscow TASS in English 1344 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovskiy received ambassadors Moise Aka of Cote d'Ivoire, Murairi Mitima Kaneno of Zaire, William Lucas Mbago of Tanzania, Zubeiru Mahmud Kazaure of Nigeria, Misheck Julius Mpande Sibanda of Zimbabwe, Chris Nesse of Ghana and Charge d'Affaires Modou Gueye of Senegal.

On the eve of Petrovskiy's working trip to these countries, the sides discussed issues concerning the establishment of a reliable system of a new post-confrontation world order, prospects for multilateral cooperation and the role of the United Nations and regional organisations, including the Organisation of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement.

They also discussed the settlement and prevention of crises and conflicts between states and the improvement of U.N. activities.

East Europe

Polish Premier Pays Working Visit 3-4 April

Arrives in Moscow

LD0304174391 Moscow TASS in English 1728 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow April 3 TASS—Jan Krzysztof Bielecki arrived in Moscow on a one-day working visit today for the first time as Polish Prime Minister. He is scheduled to hold talks with his Soviet counterpart Valentin Pavlov and President Mikhail Gorbachev on Thursday.

The results of the visit will be discussed later that day at a news conference in the Polish Embassy.

Presidential and Foreign Ministry press service officials told a TASS diplomatic correspondent that the talks will focus on bilateral relations, primarily the need to update their legal foundation. One issue to be discussed is the transit of Soviet troops through Poland after being withdrawn from Germany.

Bielecki said before leaving Warsaw that the aim of his visit is to maintain goodneighbourly relations simultaneously with moving towards integration with the European community.

He called for the search for possibilities to step up economic cooperation with the USSR after the changeover to payments in hard currency in bilateral trade.

Holds Talks With Pavlov

CM0504100991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Second Edition p 4

[TASS Report: "Soviet-Polish Talks"]

[Text] At the invitation of the Soviet Government, Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, prime minister of the Republic of Poland, stayed in the USSR from 3 to 4 April on a working visit.

During the talks USSR Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and his Polish counterpart stressed the great importance that the two sides attach to the development and strengthening of Soviet-Polish relations, relying on their historical experience and on the demands of the times as well as respecting the social and political choice of the peoples of the Soviet Union and Poland. The heads of governments exchanged information about the main directions of the implementation of the profound economic reforms, the transfer to a market economy in the USSR and Poland, and noted that the socioeconomic transformations that are under way take into account the specific conditions existing in both countries.

A broad range of questions was discussed concerning Soviet-Polish relations, above all the state of cooperation in the economic sphere and its prospects for the next few years. Having analyzed the difficulties that emerged in

trade between them and the development of economic links, the sides paid great attention to searching for ways to overcome them and to create conditions to facilitate the establishment of business contacts at the enterprise level.

Attaching great attention to the renewal of the contractual and legal basis in bilateral relations in the light of transformations currently under way in both states, the sides spoke in favor of speeding up the preparation and conclusion of a new political treaty between the USSR and the Republic of Poland.

An exchange of views took place regarding the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Republic of Poland and the transit of Soviet troops returning from the FRG via Polish territory. V.S. Pavlov drew the attention of the Polish side to the need to seek mutually acceptable solutions regarding the real estate of the Northern Group of Forces stationed in Poland in which the USSR invested great material and financial resources.

Questions were considered concerning international economic cooperation in connection with the forthcoming dissolution of CEMA, and their readiness to continue the deepening exchange of views on this subject was confirmed.

The talks revealed a coincidence of viewpoints expressed by the sides on many issues of bilateral relations.

Taking part in the talks were: On the Soviet side— S.A. Sitaryan, V.A. Durasov, K.F. Katushev, Yu.A. Kvitsinskiy, and Yu.B. Kashlev; on the Polish side— D. Ledworowski, minister of foreign economic cooperation; J. Sawicki, Polish deputy finance minister; J. Makarczyk, secretary of state at the Polish Foreign Ministry; and S. Ciosek, Polish ambassador to the USSR.

Meets With Gorbachev

PM0504102891 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Second Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Meeting in the Kremlin"]

[Text] M.S. Gorbachev met Polish Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki in the Kremlin 4 April. The encounter was brief but vigorous. M.S. Gorbachev immediately proposed reaching an agreement on the main formula for Soviet-Polish relations: "We need you and you need us." Recognition of this principle as the starting point will make it possible to resolve any issues in a spirit of reciprocity and mutual benefit.

M.S. Gorbachev inquired in detail about the progress of economic reform in Poland. A lively exchange of opinions about the processes in the USSR and Poland revealed a recurrence of certain phenomena, points of contact, and similar conclusions—despite all the differences between the situations.

There was clear agreement that relations should be based on a new footing in the context of the all-European process, but taking account of the immutable fact that the destinies of the two countries have been interwoven for centuries and have left in the peoples' memories not just drama but much that is valuable and worthy. It is particularly important to be geared to the long term and to the natural laws of good neighborliness. In this context, the president responded with interest to the Polish premier's idea of developing youth exchanges.

They agreed to prepare a new Soviet-Polish treaty from the same standpoint.

Another subject discussed was the Soviet troops' withdrawal from Poland and the strictly legal basis for this difficult process which is crucial for Soviet-Polish relations and will make it possible to avoid misunderstandings.

The desirability of an official visit to the Soviet Union by Polish President Lech Walesa in the very near future was reaffirmed.

V.S. Pavlov, A.A. Bessmertnykh, J. Makarczyk, and Ambassadors Yu.B. Kashlev and S. Ciosek took part.

Reviews Moscow Talks

LD0404182191 Moscow TASS in English 1742 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—Polish Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki today described his brief working visit here as contributing "to building goodneighbourly relations between Poland and the Soviet Union".

He told a news conference that his meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev focused on preparations for a new bilateral treaty on goodneighbourliness and for Polish President Lech Walesa's visit to Moscow.

Bielecki reported agreement to expedite drafting work on the treaty, which will define prospects for Soviet-Polish cooperation in the next twenty years. The work will be overseen by Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Yuliy Kvitsinskiy and his Polish counterpart Jerzy Makarczik.

Economic talks held by Bielecki here covered mostly trade, he said. He revealed that during his meeting with Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov they agreed that the switchover to hard currency payments in bilateral trade was too hasty.

Asked about Poland's attitude to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, popularly known as COMECON, Bielecki said that during his talks here both sides agreed that COMECON is not needed in its present form.

In his opinion, its successor should be a regional European advisory body aiming to achieve integration with the European communities.

When the Soviet troop pullout from Poland was discussed, his hosts suggested that Poland draw up a schedule for the withdrawal, Bielecki said.

Asked about the Polish minority in the Soviet Union, he said the issue was discussed in terms of opening Polish culture centres and consulates not only in the Baltics but also in the Kazakh capital Alma Ata.

The Polish premier leaves Moscow for Warsaw tonight.

Speaks to Warsaw Radio

LD0404163991 Warsaw Domestic Service in Polish 1550 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Remarks by Polish Premier Jan Krzysztof Bielecki to unidentified correspondent on the progress of his talks in Moscow; in Moscow on 4 April—recorded]

[Text] I am glad that we managed to review all important matters concerning political, economic, and cultural contacts. We listed all the problems, and we exchanged views. We spoke about them with extreme sincerity and presented our arguments. That is very important. We tried to set dates by which some discussions should be concluded.

As far as political matters and treaties which we should prepare are concerned, we raised the level of the contacts. The Polish side will be chaired by Minister Makarczyk [secretary of state at the Polish Foreign Ministry]. We think that soon it will be possible to present the final versions of these documents.

As far as economic contacts are concerned, part of our delegation is still working with part of the Soviet side to resolve some issues concerning streamlining some solutions which, well, do not further the stimulation of economic contacts between our countries, as well as clarifying the balance of payments between our states; we think these can be resolved today.

We also raised the issue of youth exchanges, contacts between young people, as a very important element for building a permanent bridge between our countries. We also spoke about the issue of Poles living in the Soviet Union, about opening cultural facilities and consular facilities. We spoke about a cultural center in Moscow. The Soviet side showed understanding for the existence of such facilities, as well as an awareness of the problem of the Polish minority living in the Soviet Union.

Romanian President Interviewed Before Visit

LD0404084791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Interview with Romanian President Ion Iliescu by correspondent Zheleznyak, place and date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Zheleznyak] ...the signing of a bilateral treaty. Some people think that it has been drawn up on qualitatively new principles, while others, to the contrary, think that it contains nothing fundamentally new. What is your view?

[Iliescu] I think that this is a new document based on fundamentally new foundations. It reflects two aspects: first, all the changes taking place in our country and the Soviet Union, and which are of course reflected in relations between countries of this zone of Europe. At the same time, however, it also reflects the changes that have been taking place on the European continent. It has to be said that we have always been interested in there being good relations between Romania and the Soviet Union.

[Zheleznyak] You are planning to develop relations not only with the Soviet Union, but also with individual republics. What is your view on this problem?

[Iliescu] It is also laid down in the principles of the new treaty that in the future, bearing in mind the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, relations of both a political nature and especially economic nature, and other areas, will be developed not only by central bodies but also by republics, and even by local bodies with economic enterprises. We will bear this in mind in our specific contacts and relations in the future.

Cited on Bilateral Ties

PM0404160391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Union Edition p 1

[Item from roundup of TASS, RIA, POSTFAKTUM, INTERFAX, and REUTER reports: "Interview with Romania's President"]

[Text] Romania's President Ion Iliescu declared in an interview with a TASS correspondent on the eve of his visit to the USSR: "We have always been interested in maintaining sound political, economic, and cultural relations between Romania and the Soviet Union." He emphasized that the Treaty on Cooperation, Good Neighborliness, and Friendship Between the USSR and Romania, which will be signed in the next few days in Moscow, is a fundamentally new document reflecting the changes taking place in both countries. Another of the visit's important goals, the president said, is to exchange experiences accumulated by the two countries in the course of implementing reforms.

Touching upon the creation of new mechanisms for cooperation between East European countries, Iliescu emphasized that, although "different views exist" on this question, interest in a new organization "must emerge."

KGB Denies Allegations on Markov Affair

LD0204130491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1223 GMT 2 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow, 2 Apr (TASS)—Prompted by certain Western special services, the foreign mass media has

come up with frequent fabrications about the involvement of the Bulgarian special services in the murder of the Bulgarian emigre writer, Georgi Markov, in London in 1978 and about the help which they allegedly received from the KGB. Radio Liberty repeated this lie again just recently, this time referring to statements made by Oleg Kalugin.

A TASS correspondent has been informed at the USSR KGB public relations center that allegations of KGB involvement in the so-called "Markov affair" are a crude invention. There was absolutely no appeal from the Bulgarian special services to the USSR KGB regarding this "affair." The KGB reserves the right to appeal to the appropriate Soviet bodies regarding calling Kalugin to account for slander.

IZVESTIYA Report on Walesa U.S. Visit

PM0204153791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[Correspondent A. Blinov report: "Lech Walesa in the United States"]

[Text] Washington—"Become Columbuses sailing off in the opposite direction. We want to be the America of East Europe... Your money will be repaid a hundredfold." These are the words with which Lech Walesa addressed U.S. businessmen on his first visit to the United States as Polish president. Eighteen months ago he was in the United States as a private individual; now he is holding official talks on U.S.-Polish political and economic cooperation. After completing his talks in Washington, Lech Walesa left for a tour of the United States.

The United States perceives Poland as a model of political and economic transformations in East Europe. The Polish leader's visit also has domestic political significance for U.S. statesmen: There are several million first- and second-generation Poles in the United States. They are an active group of voters.

On the eve of the Polish president's arrival, the U.S. press noted that the new Polish government is "moving in the right direction": The free-floating prices introduced in the country have led to stabilization of the currency exchange rate, and the intention to privatize state industry has been confirmed. It also pointed out the difficulties, however: Economic depression, unemployment, and bureaucratic barriers in the way of foreign investors.

The newspapers have been quoting the opinion of foreign policy experts in the administration: The success of Poland's reforms will serve as an example for others, whereas failure will have a negative impact on the entire situation in East Europe. External factors could play an appreciable role in this.

People here believe that the explanation for the U.S. Administration's change of attitude on the question of writing off some of Poland's state debts lies in the special regard in which the United States holds Poland. Whereas it always used to be opposed to this step in principle, it is now responsible for initiating the halving of Poland's debt to other countries' governments. On the eve of Lech Walesa's visit to the United States, the so-called Paris Club of Western creditor countries halved Poland's foreign debt on an interstate basis: The debt stood at $33 billion (Poland owes a further $15 billion to private banks).

The United States has gone even further than the general Paris Club accord. Receiving Lech Walesa in the White House, U.S. President George Bush announced his decision to cut Poland's debt to the United States by 70 percent: From $3.8 billion to $1.1 billion. The administration has also come up with a number of initiatives designed to encourage U.S. business to invest in Poland.

For his part, Lech Walesa has promised to remove barriers standing in the way of U.S. business. Henceforth, U.S. citizens will be able to enter Poland without visas. Foreign companies are not only going to be allowed to set up joint enterprises with Poles: They will also be able to open branches belonging exclusively to them and to engage in other forms of business. "May every other company in Poland be American," Lech Walesa said at a session of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington.

Political questions were also discussed during the official talks in Washington. In particular, it is reported that Lech Walesa briefed George Bush on progress in the talks on withdrawing Soviet troops from Poland. A joint statement published after the meeting between George Bush and Lech Walesa talks about a "new era of cooperation and partnership" between the United States and Poland. A U.S. Department of State spokesman stressed in a conversation with journalists that by this the United States means support for "Poland's national security and economy."

West Europe

Dzasokhov Delegation Arrives in Madrid 31 Mar

LD3103083191 Moscow TASS in English 0803 GMT 31 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Robert Serebrennikov]

[Text] Madrid March 31 TASS—The Soviet parliamentary delegation led by Aleksandr Dzasokhov, member of the Soviet Parliament Presidium and chairman of the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, arrived in Madrid on Saturday evening. The delegation will attend a meeting of parliamentarians from the CSCE member-countries, which will be held here from April 2 to 3.

Before the opening of the conference, the Soviet delegation will meet Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. Congress Dante Fascell and head

of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Congress of Deputies of Spain's General Cortes [Spanish legislature] L. Fajardo.

The Charter of Paris for a new Europe envisages setting up a parliament assembly of Europe, involving all of the CSCE member-nations. The Madrid meeting will discuss the composition, functions and methods of the future assembly's work. The assembly will be the first organisation in which parliamentarians from the European countries, the Soviet Union, the United States and Canada will cooperate.

Meets Bundestag President

LD0404054191 Moscow TASS in English 1456 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Madrid April 3 TASS—Aleksandr Dzasokhov, head of a Soviet parliamentary delegation, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee for International Affairs, met Prof. Dr. Rita Sussmuth, president of the West German Bundestag, today.

They held a substantive exchange of opinions on the state and prospects of Soviet-German cooperation, the two countries' interaction with a view of furthering the Helsinki process and implementing the documents were adopted at the Paris summit meeting.

Special attention was paid to the role of the parliaments of the two countries and their views on fundamental Helsinki process issues, namely the military-political aspects, trade-economic and humanitarian problems.

Speaking on behalf of the West German Bundestag, Rita Sussmuth expressed profound satisfaction with the fact that the USSR Supreme Soviet had completed the ratification process of the Soviet-German package of documents. She informed the Soviet parliament's representative that the West German Bundestag in its turn had thoroughly considered these documents and ratified them by an absolute majority of votes.

Also today, Dzasokhov met American congressmen, led by Dante Fascel, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, and Andre Billardon, vice-president of the National Assembly of France.

Meets With Spanish Legislature Speaker

PM0304134391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 3 Apr 91 First Edition p 4

[TASS correspondent R. Serebrennikov and PRAVDA correspondent V. Volkov report: "Meeting in Madrid"]

[Text] Madrid, 2 Apr—A.S. Dzasokhov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee, met Monday with Felix Pons Irazazabal, speaker of Spain's Congress of Deputies of the Cortes Generales (parliament).

During the talks questions linked with the meeting opening in Madrid today between parliamentarians from the CSCE countries were discussed.

Greek Minister Previews Bessmertnykh Visit

LD0404124891 Moscow TASS in English 1137 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS Correspondent Vladimir Malyshev]

[Text] Athens April 4 TASS—Aleksandr Bessmertnykh's visit to Greece, the first such visit by a Soviet foreign minister, will open a new era in bilateral relations, Greek Foreign Minister Andonios Samaras told TASS.

Both countries share long cultural traditions, he said. Differing political outlooks did not prevent the two countries from improving their economic ties in the past fifteen years, pursuing large projects and trade exchanges.

The groundwork for deeper bilateral cooperation through new joint ventures and greater exports of agricultural and consumer products is being laid down, Samaras said.

Cultural cooperation between the Soviet Union and Greece will also have a favourable impact on Eastern Europe and the Balkan peninsula, he said.

The Greek side wants the talks with Bessmertnykh to be successful. "We express hope there will be a detailed discussion and agreement on the problems of peace and stability in the Mediterranean, as well as on regional issues," Samaras stressed.

Petrovskiy Receives Message From French Envoy

LD0404090491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1845 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow, 3 Apr (TASS)—Vladimir Petrovskiy, deputy minister of foreign affairs, today has received Bertrand Dufourcq, French ambassador to the USSR, who relayed a verbal message sent by Roland Dumas, French minister of foreign affairs, to USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh. During the conversation that took place afterward, problems developing in the Persian Gulf region were discussed in the context of the UN Security Council framework.

Supreme Soviet

Law Adopted on Entrepreneurial Activities

LD0404120291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] The law on general principles of the enterpreneurial activities of USSR citizens was adopted today during the morning sitting of the country's Supreme Soviet. A decision on the state of affairs in agriculture, and urgent measures to prepare for field work, was also adopted. This, in the view of observers, is yet another attempt to normalize the situation in the countryside, which is becoming ever more critical, with the aid of administrative measures.

Criminal Law, Budget Deficit Discussed

LD0404151991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network 1200 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Report by correspondent Leonid Lazarevich from the USSR Supreme Soviet session in the Kremlin]

[Text] An interval in the session's work has begun here. You know, the atmosphere here at the session is calm and very businesslike. The deputies have been working since this morning and very intensively. Before the interval, the first reading of the fundamentals of the criminal legislation of the USSR and union republics was discussed. You know, it is a complex and interesting document. But it was noted here at the session that we had 231,000 people convicted in one year, and the new legislation is aimed at doing everything to reduce the number of people convicted. It is hard to comment on the document but I feel that this criminal legislation is more humane. Deputies are expressing their views and they are voicing the most varied points of view.

Before that, another very important document was adopted at the congress. [as heard] It is an appeal to the supreme soviets of the republics. It concerns the budget, the union budget of our whole country. What is it about? The union budget was meant to be 51 billion rubles in the first quarter, but 35 billion rubles of that were not received. As a result, the Finance Ministry had to take credits. They are attracting interest. This might lead to inflation which will develop very quickly. For this reason, the Supreme Soviet has appealed to its colleagues in the union republics, calling on them to do everything to avoid that.

Earlier, a resolution was adopted on the state of affairs in agriculture and urgent measures to prepare for field work. You know, the sowing is in progress now and the session has elaborated measures which are necessary to enable this work to be conducted precisely and to ensure that we have a good harvest this year and that we all have something in the shops to buy.

Agricultural Problems Discussed

LD0404104591 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0900 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Excerpt] I must say that work is also going on today at the USSR Supreme Soviet. There is a joint session of the chambers. Our legislative correspondent, Leonid Lazarevich, is reporting. Hello, Leonid, we are listening to you.

[Lazarevich] Good day. A minute ago, the USSR Supreme Soviet decree on the state of affairs in agriculture and the urgent measures on preparations for work in the fields has been adopted. I will cite the first paragraph of this decree: The socioeconomic situation in the countryside has become acutely worse and is becoming critical in character. This is the situation now, on the eve of sowing. The situation is most complex, and this is what they have just spoken about now. But you know, the question arises, what is the matter? Why is the Supreme Soviet examining this problem?

Agricultural problems and agriculture now fall totally within the authority of the republics. Yes, and this was emphasized at the session, but at the same time it was stated that the problem of material-technical supplies are resolved through the center, and the situation regarding these problems is very bad, indeed.

Can you imagine; last year, 7 billion rubles worth of production was not delivered to agriculture, and these deliveries are decreasing. This creates very difficult conditions for the villages.

One more thing. You know that the prices of spare parts, fuel, and equipment have risen unbelievably. I have here what the deputies have said—prices have quadrupled, trebled, doubled. In addition, the practice of paying compensation to agricultural workers has now started. As a result, the losses to agriculture—as a result of paying this compensation and the rise in prices of what is delivered to them—the cost to agriculture 80 billion rubles. Incidentally, all the profits from last year amounted to only 58 billion rubles. This means that all of our agriculture, with the exception of individual very strong farms, are recumbent; they are running at a loss and measures need to be taken.

Here at the session, it became clear that in principle, measures are being worked out allowing the Council of Ministers to resolve this problem in the course of a week. [passage omitted]

Republics Urged To Contribute to Union Budget

LD0404134991 Moscow TASS in English 1319 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS legislative correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—The Soviet parliament today adopted an address to republican parliaments

urging them to suspend the decision on the refusal to make contributions to the Union budget, a decision that threatens to end in economic collapse.

Addressing the session of parliament, Chairman of the Parliamentary Planning and Budgetary Commission Viktor Kucherenko said that the deficit of the Union budget in the first quarter of the current year amounted to 33 billion roubles as a result of the fact that the republics contributed only 18 billion roubles to the centre instead of the 54 billion roubles planned under the economic agreement between the central authorities and the republics. [figures as received]

Russia, the Ukraine and Baltic Republics are the main violators of the budgetary agreements.

Heads of republican ministries and banks issue arbitrary directives not to contribute funds to the Union budget or freeze them in special accounts, Kucherenko said. If this tendency persists, the Union budget will not receive 123 billion roubles this year while Russia will fail to contribute 105 billion roubles out of this sum.

The address says that as the state cannot abrogate the earlier adopted programmes, the USSR Finance Ministry has already applied for banking credit in the first quarter. As a result of this, new sums of credits and ready money unensured with goods will flow into the market which is unbalanced as it is. Unless the situation changes, this will lead to hyperinflation and devastating consequences resulting from it.

Press Requires Safeguards Against Censorship

PM0404102191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[G. Shipitko article under the rubric "In the USSR Supreme Soviet Committees and Commissions": "Defending Glasnost"]

[Text] The USSR Supreme Soviet Committee for Questions of Glasnost and Citizens' Rights and Appeals has held a three-day seminar-conference with the chairmen of republic Supreme Soviet and kray and oblast soviet committees for questions of glasnost and citizens' rights and appeals. Incidentally, the discussion itself went far beyond a simple appraisal of the application of the law under current conditions.

As Candidate of Juridical Sciences Yu. Baturin, chairman of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Institute of State and Law, noted, the problem is far wider. Glasnost has always met with opposition. Just as there has constantly been a desire to reduce it to the level of the doses considered adequate by the powers that be. Times change, but even in our day a sophisticated censorship system makes it possible to hide from society any information considered unsuitable or inappropriate for ideological reasons.

The abolition of censorship has not saved society from old views of the mass media—ranging from "useful or useless" to open calls within the Supreme Soviet for the Press Law to be halted. Today we should be discussing not just press freedom and glasnost but citizens' right to obtain any information. Above all, information concerning their personal interests. This should be regulated by corresponding normative acts. It should be based on the same principles of the democratic press. These are, above all, a newspaper's independence of its founder, freedom to choose its editor, and right to its own opinion. Incidentally, Yu. Baturin believes, we have yet to implement these principles. Hence the demands being made from various quarters for the "unrestrained" press—that has forgotten whom it should be serving—to be brought under control.

Incidentally, the theoretical arguments about the essence of the press in a democratic state could be explored further, but of far greater interest are the opportunities afforded by the Law on the Press adopted last June. However—in the opinion of Kh. Sheynin, deputy department chief at the USSR Supreme Court—the law is not yet being used to the full. Primarily it is a question of norms in the law such as the right of citizens to obtain information, the right of the mass media to report it, and the right of officials to provide it. It is confusing, he noted, when journalists are denied this right but fail to turn to law-enforcement organs to protect their rights. Not a single case has been brought since the day the law was passed, even though there is now every legal opportunity to institute proceedings against officials who have distorted information or have prevented its being issued.

In his speech M. Nenashev, chairman of the USSR State Committee for the Press, quoted the following figures: Currently 1,773 all-Union publications have been registered, half were being published for the first time. The ownership of newspapers and magazines reflects the changes that have occurred in the press market following the adoption of the law. Some 803 publications are owned by state organizations, 233 by editorial offices and publishing houses, 291 by social organizations, 27 by party organizations, and 19 by religious organizations. There are publications issued by joint-stock and cooperative societies and by joint ventures. Private individuals own 241 publications.

Incidentally, the proper control should be instilled in this area too. In the opinion of the leader of the State Committee for Publishing Houses, Printing Plants, and the Book Trade somebody should coordinate their work and, in his opinion, special departments and administrations are needed to direct their activity. This is all the more necessary at a time when the mass media have found themselves to the fore under the conditions of market relations. So far many publications have been left to their own devices.

Many of the participants in the seminar-conference agreed with this framing of the question. However, currently both republic and Union legislation lacks the

procedural norms to allow administrative and criminal proceedings to be instituted against people who flout the law. The country's cities are now being inundated with various literature and newspapers that are not in line with constitutional norms.

Undoubtedly, normative practice still lags behind the existing Law on the Press. In the opinion of V. Foteyev, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Glasnost Committee, a great deal still remains to be done. But it is already quite obvious that we should renounce the practice of undermining the law with the old administrative-edict approach to running the mass media. Today the committee has essentially turned into a place where complaints demanding that the press be curbed are investigated. Although it is quite obvious that a law exists for this purpose and society should be guided by it. When demands are made in the USSR Supreme Soviet for an investigation into the latest press article not to deputies' liking, this should be remembered. Otherwise this will turn into lawlessness and another curb on glasnost. Perhaps the mass media now really find themselves facing a qualitatively different task: shaping public opinion on the basis of really diverse information, V. Foteyev believes.

The committee sees its task above all as being to ensure the implementation of the Law on the Press. It is planned to develop a program which will really safeguard glasnost: to set up a printing base and organs to handle cadre training and the protection of journalists and publications. Currently they have to operate under conditions of considerable pressure from both publishers and founders. In this regard the example of SVOY GOLOS, the newspaper of Krasnoyarsk Kray people's deputies, is typical. In exchange for agreeing to print the newspaper the "Krasnoyarskiy Rabochiy" Publishing House demanded an assurance from the editorial office that "it would pledge not to indulge in wholesale criticism of party committees." This is a symptomatic incident typical of the clear monopoly currently operating in the publishing market. Incidentally, it is not just local publications that are encountering these ultimatums. The Pravda Publishing House, in response to a request from a number of central publications to found newspapers, refused to conclude contracts with them.

Among the proposals aimed at safeguarding glasnost were the following. It is necessary to prepare a number of laws to reinforce and clarify the Law on the Press. Essentially it is a question of additional legal safeguards for glasnost in the country. But this will require agreed and coordinated action, primarily with republic organs of power. Incidentally, under current conditions we should hardly be counting on this—the actual approach to the understanding of glasnost is too polarized today. The makeup of the participants reaffirmed this—representatives from the Baltic, the Transcaucasus, and a number of RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] republics were missing.

Political & Social

Centrist Bloc Deemed 'Defunct'

PM0504135791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Item in roundup of IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, POSTFACTUM, URAL-AKTSEPT, REUTERS, and UPI reports: "Is There a Centrist Bloc?"]

[Text] A joint session of representatives of the left-centrist radical bloc of political parties and movements with representatives of a number of organizations which established the Centrist Bloc last summer was held at the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace in Moscow Wednesday.

It was pointed out at the session that nine of the 11 founding organizations have left the Centrist Bloc in recent months, and the bloc's name has become a screen behind which right-wing reactionary forces operate.

The speakers confirmed that the bloc virtually disbanded itself in January without realizing its set tasks. In this connection the session participants adopted a decision to consider the Centrist Bloc defunct, INTERFAX has reported.

Yakovlev Predicts Conservative Defeat

PM0404111191 Amsterdam DE VOLKSKRANT in Dutch 30 Mar 91 p 4

[Interview with Aleksandr Yakovlev, adviser to Soviet President Gorbachev, by Bernard Guetta in Moscow 27 March; first paragraph is DE VOLKSKRANT introduction: "Conservative Forces in the Soviet Union Are on Their Death Bed"]

[Text] After the recent referendum in the Soviet Union and on the eve of the massive pro-Yeltsin demonstration last Thursday [27 March] Bernard Guetta, chief editor of French financial daily LA TRIBUNE DE L'EXPANSION, was granted an interview with Aleksandr Yakovlev, adviser to President Gorbachev. Guetta, who until recently was LE MONDE's Moscow correspondent, was received by Yakovlev in the Kremlin, where he still has a room next to Gorbachev's.

[Guetta] Apart from the personal rivalry, are there real political differences between Yeltsin and Gorbachev?

[Yakovlev] I find it difficult to answer that question because in my opinion there is no way out of our present difficulties other than close cooperation among all political forces, including cooperation between Gorbachev and Yeltsin.

[Guetta] At the end of August a compromise was reached between Yeltsin and Gorbachev. The transition to a market economy would be made in "500 days." There was much talk of a center-left coalition, but the compromise was never put into effect. What prevented this?

[Yakovlev] The pressure from all sorts of forces around the government, the military-industrial complex, the whole machinery of the state economy which dug in its heels. The fundamental contradiction is that the reforms on which we are working—the law-governing enterprises, the reform of agriculture, demonopolization, the cooperatives, the banks, and much more—are alien to this system. If the system had accepted the 500 days program it would have agreed to its own demolition, because if it had done so all the existing structures of the economy would have been destroyed little by little.

[Guetta] The president had to say "no"?

[Yakovlev] Yes. The president had to take account of reality.

[Guetta] Could you give a description of the conservative forces which were able to call a halt to the movement which seemed to be getting under way in August? What is the military-industrial complex in reality?

[Yakovlev] Really it is nothing extraordinary. Just as in the United States and other countries it is the whole military production machine, the Army, and all the infrastructures which go with them.

I can easily imagine the mood of the people who are part of this complex. They have at their disposal a massive scientific machine, highly trained workers and do not need to worry about a market for their products. It is not only that the conversion of their factories to peaceful production gives rise to all sorts of difficulties: This conversion also means that from being people with a privileged status they become an ordinary group. They are fighting for their survival.

[Guetta] How many people are involved? Five million?

[Yakovlev] Probably. Perhaps more.

[Guetta] And who are the other conservatives?

[Yakovlev] First, we ourselves are, all of us as a society. As the enthusiasm of the revolution dissipated into the swamp of dogmatism, personal advantage and cynicism became the laws of social behavior. It became possible to say one thing and do another. People talked about human life as a value in itself, but at the same time people were being shot down and killed in the name of that value. The individual was no more than a cog in the machinery of the state, and armed force was the "midwife of history." We were living a lie.

[Guetta] But apart from this historical legacy, who were the people who took a stand against the center-left coalition in August? The party apparatus, the Army?

[Yakovlev] The party apparatus within the state economy and the higher echelons of the armed forces naturally wanted none of the proposed reforms. Read the internal party press. In it perestroyka is described as an import and as a petit bourgeois revolution. The "so-called democrats" are the agents of the shadow economy. People are returning to the old way of talking, to the witch hunt. I myself am depicted as an CIA agent who has to be removed to destroy Zionism. There are signs of a counteroffensive and a weakening of democracy.

[Guetta] What do these conservatives want?

[Yakovlev] To return to power.

[Guetta] Since the failure of the August compromise a number of major reformers have left the president's team. Their places have been taken by conservative figures with little prestige. Does this mean that President Gorbachev—whether he wanted to or not—has adopted a conservative course?

[Yakovlev] I would not draw too hasty conclusions. You must not look only at who comes and who goes, but also at what actually happens. A new economic infrastructure is coming into being which will demand political change.

[Guetta] But surely you will not make progress with people like Pavlov (the new Soviet prime minister) and General Gromov (commander in Afghanistan, now deputy interior minister). Or will you?

[Yakovlev] Pavlov's views do not interest me. What is important is the decisions he will make. If after next week's price rises he subsequently succeeds in taking 150 to 200 million rubles out of circulation through the sale of state property, I am quite willing to forgive his remarks about the conspiracies of Western banks.

[Guetta] Why should the conservatives, who have grown stronger since August, now be advocates of what they resisted yesterday?

[Yakovlev] What else can they do? As a result of the shortages in the stores the general public has become more conservative, and if you have to stand in line for four hours for a piece of meat the words "democracy" and "freedom" lose their meaning. But that does not alter the fact that the general mentality of people has changed. Circumstances are totally different.

[Guetta] Why have you not resigned like Shevardnadze?

[Yakovlev] I have been working with the president since the start of perestroyka and even before that. Perestroyka is going badly and I share the responsibility for this. It would be immoral to retreat at a difficult moment. Shevardnadze worked on foreign policy. It was a success. Things were different for him. I have worked on domestic policy.

[Guetta] Shevardnadze did not resign because his work was done, but to warn of the danger of a dictatorship.

[Yakovlev] And what am I doing? In this interview I am warning of the danger from the conservatives. Who else inside the presidential team will do that? There are situations in which the easiest thing is to shut the door.

[Guetta] You are saying that the conservatives are dominant at the moment?

[Yakovlev] No, I am not saying that at all. On the contrary, I am saying that the conservative forces are on their death bed. But it often happens that before someone dies he revives.

[Guetta] Well, if the conservatives are not dominant, they do form a bloc at present, while the reformers are divided and discontent is growing. How long can you go on ruling like this?

[Yakovlev] Russia has been ruled using totalitarian methods for the past thousand years.

[Guetta] And this is continuing?

[Yakovlev] This is continuing, but it is precisely what we, for the first time in history, are trying to break with.

[Guetta] To whom do you feel most akin, Yeltsin or the conservatives?

[Yakovlev] I completely reject the conservatives, who view me as their greatest enemy. But this does not mean that I agree with everything that Yeltsin does and support him. It worries me that a current which I really do view as reformist is demanding the president's resignation just like the conservatives. Where is the difference?

[Guetta] The difference is enormous. The reformers want an acceleration of the reforms, the conservatives want to block the reforms.

[Yakovlev] Yes, they do want to, but nothing has been blocked as yet.

[Guetta] And what about the 500 days plan?

[Yakovlev] The most important thing about the 500 days plan, of which I was and am a supporter, was that it formed a platform for a political accord. All republics, including Russia, agreed with it. It was a chance that was not grasped.

[Guetta] How can you then say that the conservatives are in their death throes?

[Yakovlev] I am not saying that they are not active. I am saying that they will not win. They could achieve a temporary victory. Perestroyka can make all sorts of zigzags. It can take one step forward and two steps back, but I am convinced that it will move forward.

[Guetta] But, given your firm conviction, what makes you believe in the irreversibility of perestroyka and Gorbachev's commitment to democracy?

[Yakovlev] As soon as food supplies are improved circumstances for perestroyka will again become more favorable. As far as Gorbachev is concerned he is and remains a democrat. He has nothing to do with the conservative wing, which does not recognize him as one of its own, but on the contrary rejects him.

[Guetta] What will Mikhail Gorbachev do with the Baltic republics?

[Yakovlev] What can he do? There is a law. If the republics in the Union want to stay they will stay. If they want to leave, let them go—but within the framework of the law.

[Guetta] What will Gorbachev do with the results of the referendum?

[Yakovlev] The referendum was consultative. It has no automatic legal repercussions, but its political significance is great because despite the social difficulties the people have spoken out in favor of a new Union. The treaty must now be signed quickly.

[Guetta] The Balts, and others, will not sign.

[Yakovlev] If they do not want to sign, then let them not sign. We will then enter into normal international relations. We buy their agricultural produce at world market prices and they buy our energy at world prices and may they live in good health!

[Guetta] Do you believe in the possibility of a military coup in the Soviet Union?

[Yakovlev] No, I do not. There is no historical precedent in Russia. That sort of thing has never happened before.

[Guetta] If Gorbachev is not threatened by a coup, on what can he support himself?

[Yakovlev] On the reforms which have begun and which cannot be stopped.

[Guetta] One last question: In your office there is a portrait of Gorbachev and his official portrait hangs on the wall. Have you no portrait of Lenin?

[Yakovlev] (Laughs) There are three hooks in the wall.

[Guetta] Empty hooks. Was there a picture of Lenin there before?

[Yakovlev] It is unlikely that it was a picture of Roosevelt.

Gorbachev's 'Enormous' Power Examined

PM0404150591 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 4 Apr 91 p 2

["Viewpoint" by P. Voshchanov: "Such Different Aprils..."]

[Text] Perestroyka ended quietly. Somehow without anyone noticing, it slipped into the world of political memoirs, where there is no place for half-truth and carefully thought-out deception. The denizens of the Kremlin and its immediate environs, who only yesterday had been lavish with confessions of love and loyalty, hastened to remove its name from circulation, although only a little while ago they had pronounced it with particular emotion. You could sense from everything that a new political season was beginning in the country...

Gorbachev Succeeds Gorbachev

Meanwhile we are entering the seventh and seemingly the last April of perestroyka. Of late Gorbachev has been particularly emphasizing his immutable commitment to the course of renewing Soviet society. And although he has been doing this more emotionally than usual, his assurances no longer meet with a response among most of his fellow citizens. A kind of syndrome of indifference toward everything connected with him has now been developed in them, and this is probably one of the most tragic results of Gorbachev's domestic political career. Having started out as a truly national hero, the people's hope, as it were, and the defender of the downtrodden and underprivileged, it looks as though he will end up unable to count on the sympathy of even his closest comrades in arms. Today the president is the target of sharp criticism from both right and left.

What is the reason for this extremely swift decline in the president's rating? There are probably several reasons, but nevertheless, I think the prime one lies in the contradictoriness of his personal political position. "Whose side are you on, Mikhail Gorbachev?"—for a number of years placards containing that question have been an invariable feature of rallies with the most diverse orientations—ranging from orthodox communists to extreme radicals. It has to be said that the president has shown a degree of virtuosity in evading a direct answer. Each time, with unfeigned indignation, he has declared that in our country perestroyka has no opponents, the whole country is united in desiring to build a rule-of-law democratic state. Many people were satisfied by this argument, but the number of such people has declined as it has become increasingly obvious that Gorbachev is not only not embarking on a direct conflict with totalitarian structures but, what is more, is doing everything possible to adapt them to the external attributes of democracy and to preserve the CPSU as the political instrument of state power.

"He would be happy to, but they won't let him, they are stopping him..."—a while ago the assessment of Gorbachev's domestic political zigzags proceeded from this simple logic—which, incidentally, rules out any personal criticism. However, from the middle of last year doubts began to mount in society: Is Gorbachev fighting the conservatives? You increasingly sharply sensed the reverse, since increasingly often the main target of criticism from the highest quarters was forces to the left of the president. Recently Gorbachev has been emphatically harsh in his polemic with the democrats, but has not ventured anything similar in his relations with top party functionaries. With them he has invariably remained mild and tactful, has not made personal attacks, and has confined himself to political allegories. For instance, there has been no end to the charges he has heard from the leader of Russia's communists, but there has been no appropriate reaction! It is impossible even to imagine a similar situation in Gorbachev's relations with Yeltsin or any other leader of the democratic movement. Here the president's tactics have often been different: "Two eyes for an eye! A jaw for a tooth!"

Enormous power is now concentrated in Gorbachev's hands. Many people are concerned with this, which is perfectly understandable. Is not the country sliding toward another authoritarian regime carefully protected by the law and reliable party-state propaganda? He has always countered charges such as "Gorbachev is hungry for power" with the argument: In 1985 the general secretary had as much power as he chose! That is a striking remark, but untrue.

The general secretary did indeed concentrate almost dictatorial power in his hands. But it cannot be forgotten that dictatorship is based by no means on dictators, but on the political structure that elevates them above everyone and proclaims: "Rule!" Dictators actually lose twice: first when their faithful servants turn their back on them, and second when the people drive them out. In our country everything depended on the servants alone. In 1985 Gorbachev probably understood this simple truth of our totalitarian system. So long as everything in the country is determined by the party apparatus, the boundless power of the general secretary is no more than an illusion. The reality is dictatorship by party functionaries, middle-level and certainly not eminent. A great deal depended on their favor, including the career of "the man himself." Heaven forbid you do anything to displease them! "Opinion" will slither like a rattlesnake through Central Committee and obkom [party oblast committee] offices and, just you see, after a routine plenum in a year or two the "outstanding politician" will depart into retirement, into oblivion.

Gorbachev's perestroyka pursued a very definite aim—to balance party and state power and thereby create a second base of political support for himself. Democratization was necessary only insofar as it helped to resolve this task. And no more than that. That is why the "so-called democrats" are not entirely fair to Gorbachev in accusing him of turning his back on their democratic movement. Essentially he was never on their side and did not ever dissemble—he did not publicly doubt the correctness of the socialist choice, his dedication to communist ideals, and his membership of the party which for many years eradicated any free thinking by fire and the sword. Throughout these years we idealized our leader's democratism. And we did this without any coercion from above. Clearly, our former political life was all too painful and the former leadership was all too wretched.

Nevertheless, the perplexity aroused by the contradiction between the "master's words and deeds" gradually developed into mute protest and then massive irritation. This was intensified by the economic disintegration, whose origins lie in the same thing—the center's desire to change everything essentially without changing anything. By the start of last year it had become obvious: The crisis of Gorbachev's domestic political image threatens to become a destabilizing factor. And then

official propaganda, through the mouth of liberal commentators, was forced to urgently convey to the public mind an idea designed to arouse sympathy and restore the attractiveness of the political image: "Gorbachev is carefully avoiding an open clash between the opposing forces in reforming Soviet society, and so he is forced to make constant compromises. Taking the overall view, he is a sacrifice on the altar of social peace in the country." But if there are sacrifices, there must also be people to blame for these sacrifices. Who are they? It is not worth speculating about how Gorbachev-85 would have answered this question. One thing is certain: He would have tried to gain the sympathy of the strengthening democratic movement and not to spoil his relations with the partocracy, which retains its power. Gorbachev-91 is much more definite in his political biases. He makes no secret of the fact that he sees the democrats—"so-called," of course!—as the main opponents who are trying to implement "far-reaching schemes which in a number of cases originated in alien scientific centers and alien heads." And this is yet another alarming symptom—the enemy image persistently fashioned by party propaganda lately is taken to its logical conclusion by the president himself. What is this—a casual coincidence between political events or a political pattern?

Here Comes the Horned Goat!

If you think back to the first spring of perestroyka, the spring of 1985, and compare it with this spring, everything appears to be reflected in a distorting mirror. Merits have become deficiencies, victories have become defeats. Heroes have become antiheroes. Tyrants have acquired the features of defenders of the people. Yesterday's dictatorship, having recovered in a year or two from fear, an unfamiliar experience for it, is on the "warpath" and is acting so successfully in this vein that citizens remote from politics (and they constitute the majority) are now in total confusion: "Who is to be trusted? Apparently the new people are no better than their predecessors!" And who were those predecessors? Not many people can now remember. The agonizingly joyless daily routine has wiped something in their memory, "restructured" propaganda has had an effect.

It is an obvious fact that today in the public mind the democratic idea looks far less attractive than it did a year or two ago. The political battles that have unfolded against the background of the mass impoverishment of the population have merely bred irritation: "They are fighting for power, while we are at death's door!" It cannot be said that all the democrats' losses as a result have been gains for the former party structures. Sociological polls indicate precisely the reverse—the attractiveness of the CPSU, its political slogans, and finally of its leaders is continuing to decline. Nevertheless, misgivings are being confirmed: Democracy is doomed unless it feeds the people!

You often hear reproaches: The new politicians are garrulous, incompetent, ambitious, and incapable of reaching agreement among themselves... You may agree with much of that and even add a thing to two. But, while agreeing, you must not lose sight of the main point: The democrats' problem is that the people perceive the structures they have created as real power, although in reality to this day they do not possess real power. Power and the semblance of power—that is the result of the separation of the Communist Party from the Soviet state carried out over these years... Why throughout these years has the CPSU leadership been quite tolerant of Gorbachev's reforms although they have seemingly weakened its power? The explanation is simple—their interests have never diverged. The architect of perestroyka, in creating a second, nonparty power base, has secured great political stability for himself while the party, retaining the real levers of management, has redirected public discontent toward other structures with no connection with itself. What has been created is the possibility of a political renaissance and rebirth of the CPSU—disillusionment with the democrats and the muddle caused by perestroyka were bound to make the restoration of the former setup not only necessary but even desired.

Six years ago the country's greatest fear was a conspiracy by the partocracy. At the slightest suspicions millions of people were prepared to take to the streets: "Let us defend perestroyka! Let us defend Gorbachev!" But now... Now the struggle for Gorbachev has become a struggle against Gorbachev. The old system has gone onto the offensive against the new system. Reports suddenly appeared in the pages of a number of central publications that give birth only to what has been conceived on orders from the highest authority: "The so-called 'democrats' are hatching a plot against the legally elected authorities and primarily against the president himself." The hitherto totally unknown "Program-90," allegedly drawn up by "Democratic Russia" ideologists and adopted by that movement as a plan for seizing power in the country, was dredged up. This document was never published in full, merely quoted and presented at length in a rather free account. Accepting everything that was published as the truth, the country ought to have shuddered at the satanic schemes. And no wonder—who rejoices at civil war, the disorganization of economic life, economic sabotage, the deliberate spoiling of agricultural produce, and even artificially caused famine? Wrecking and enemies of the people—a familiar picture!

But this was merely a "probing action." Then came a series of far graver accusations. The list is extremely impressive, here are just a few.... "The democrats are maintaining and effectively promoting anticommunist hysteria and are implementing a separatist and nationalist course. Their goal is the disintegration of the Union.... The idea of civil war is being foisted on the country.... The democrats are straining to reach power with the support of the mafia, both Soviet and international.... The country's national assets and natural

wealth are being rapaciously squandered.... The democrats' incompetent economic policy is leading to the enslavement of the country by transnational imperialist monopolies..."

Many of today's political processes are rooted in fall of last year. That was when the president, to everybody's surprise, gave up the "500 days" program and threw down the gauntlet from behind the Kremlin wall. And that was when a large-scale campaign to discredit the new power structures that are just experiencing their birth pangs began. Is the coincidence between these events pure chance? In politics a series of accidents always gives rise to a pattern...

Power Was Lying Around in the Dirt...

It is also natural that one of V. Pavlov's first acts on entering the post of the country's prime minister was to create an "experimental creative center" corporation. At the time many people were astonished at the generosity with which the head of the Cabinet of Ministers, who, incidentally, is very concerned with the income side of the Union budget, granted extremely broad benefits and privileges to the new organization. These include out-of-turn access to material resources, the right to sell its output at free prices, and effectively total relief from taxes. At a time when many new firms cannot get hold of anywhere in Moscow even on a crippling lease, this corporation has been given full use not even of a mansion—of an entire street in the historic center of the capital. And, finally, the Defense Ministry, MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], and KGB have been authorized to "assign to the corporation six, eight, and five officers and command personnel respectively while keeping them on active military service (in the active reserve)..."

What kind of an organization is it that has proved so necessary to the Union leadership? The point is that since fall of last year it has prepared a scenario for a new political strategy for running the country "in conditions of mounting destructive processes" which bears the highfalutin title "Concept of Actions of the Bloc of Centrist Forces Headed by the USSR President." It recommends to the president and the Union government a two-stage political program of specific actions (there is a lot of discussion in the document, of course, but the main point is this). During the first stage the center should "dissociate itself from so-called 'left-wing' forces, which, consciously or otherwise, have now essentially embarked on the path of safeguarding the interests of the 'toiling [chernyy] state'—this can be done in the course of a broad political campaign..." And during the second stage? "The declaration of a state of emergency (or martial law), now under the strict political control of the centrist bloc. Here, since the enemy is proclaimed to be politicized crime, there will be no war by the party and the president against their own people, there will be—merely!—a series of 'Panama-style' actions on the territory of the USSR." Those are quotations. And I think they suggest the answer to the question of why those benefits are being provided. They are being provided for "several scenarios for implementing such transformations, including a supposedly 'left-wing' scenario including complaints from the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic]."

It would be possible to pay no particular attention to this document were it not for one circumstance: Everything that has happened in our political arena between last fall and the present day fits in perfectly with the scenario prepared by the corporation, which, incidentally, enjoys patronage not only in top government circles but also in party circles. The other day S. Kurginyan, the corporation's leader, appeared on the "Vremya" program. That too is very indicative.

World political experience has repeatedly confirmed: Dictatorship emerges from anarchy. Never mind about world experience! Our own experience shows the same. I recently read an interesting remark by Lenin, who assessed the essence of the October Bolshevik coup in the following terms: Power was lying around in the dirt on the street—and no one was picking it up.... We picked it up.... The present-day disciples of the originator of the system have modernized this thesis and attached it to new conditions: Via anarchy you can not only seize power, but also retain it. In any explanatory dictionary we will find more or less the following: Power is the capability and possibility of influencing people's activity and behavior. Note: the capability and possibility—they are the secret! Power that is incapable of ruling tries to convince people that it is being stopped from doing so. But by whom? By those who are in opposition to it, of course. The tactics of political struggle follow from this: Elevating your own lack of will to the status of national catastrophe, you shout: "Sic 'em!"

Shevardnadze TV Interview 29 Mar

LD0304140491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2116 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Interview with former USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Amvrosiyevich Shevardnadze by program presenter Pavel Molchanov on 29 March; place not given; from the "Before and After Midnight" program—recorded]

[Text] [Molchanov] Eduard Amvrosiyevich, following your announcement of your resignation in the Kremlin on 20 December and your return home, what did your wife say to you? How did you spend that evening?

[Shevardnadze] That's a family secret! It came as not surprise for my wife, my children, and my aides. I talked with her early in the morning of the 20th, and with my children in Tbilisi, by telephone, and with my aides, so it was a decision we had agreed on.

Was this resignation, this action, a personal drama? I would reply to that question that it would not be right, it would be wrong, dishonest, and insincere to say that it was a simple or very easy decision. It was certainly connected with considerations and reflections, with worries, deep serious worries, on the one hand. On the other

hand, I reckon that the step was taken...[changes thought] It was an honest man that took the step, let's put it that way. I considered just such a way of acting necessary. So, I don't believe that it was any kind of personal drama, tragedy, and so forth.

[Molchanov] May I quote: I cannot reconcile myself to the trials awaiting our people. The development of events may lead to a repetition of what happened in Tbilisi and Baku.

Those are your words, spoken a few days before the Baltic tragedy. Is this political intuition, or a precise knowledge of the future scenario?

[Shevardnadze] You know, that was the result of my analysis of the situation in the country. You well remember my words—I did not come to such a conclusion all at once. So it was rather an analysis, the results of this analysis, my conclusions. I believe that the subsequent events, sadly, confirmed that my words were not without foundation.

[Molchanov] In your view, is it very bad to strain for power [rvatsya k vlasti], is it from the Soviet lexicon (?as such), or are the democrats in our country, those dignified now by that name, waging a struggle for power which is natural for the whole world, and doing so in a country where power has now belonged for 73 years to people who are members of the Communist Party?

[Shevardnadze] I see nothing terrible in the fact that democratic tendencies, democratic movements aspire for power. We ourselves promoted the emergence and the formation of the country's democratic movement, and we should have prepared ourselves for this, psychologically and morally. This is, I stress, a normal situation. Another question concerns not only the so-called democrats, but also others who are also straining for power.

[Molchanov] Excuse me, are you talking about so-called democrats?

[Shevardnadze] No, what I have in mind is the radicals among the democrats. There are such people, and among other things there is the danger of which I spoke in my speech. It could come from the left or the right, the slogans vary. The matter concerns rather the political culture of this struggle, this political struggle. It seems to be, at today's stage, at any rate, that this political culture lacks standards. This applies to the democrats to a certain extent, and probably more so, I spoke about the reactionary forces, which really are straining for power, and which promise us tomorrow or the day after the establishment of a dictatorship, as a transitional stage, a transitional period, and so forth. I still reckoned and do reckon that this is the main danger. It is not from the democrats that we should expect some some of adventurism, but precisely from the extreme right-wing reactionary forces. They really do exist in our society.

[Molchanov] Now that you have spoken of the reactionary forces, who are they, for you, these reactionary forces that again want to plunge us into the so familiar atmosphere of dictatorship and keep us from returning to world civilization?

[Shevardnadze] You know, I said in my speech that I would not name names, and I do not intend to do so now. But there are quite a few of them, we have sensed this for ourselves, we sense it here and in the republics. I spoke about a threat from the right. This threat remains. I spoke of the threat of a dictatorship setting in. It seems to me that this threat has not diminished, and maybe against the backdrop of the overall crisis, the complication of the situation, the exacerbation of the social, political situation, and interethnic relations, this has become even more of a danger.

[Molchanov] But if reaction in the country becomes even stronger, will the foreign policy course that you were conducting really be possible?

[Shevardnadze] In conditions of instability, and so far I note and I state that instability, elements of instability are intensifying, becoming a more serious threat, it will become increasingly difficult to conduct, to implement the principles of the new political thinking.

[Molchanov] Do you believe that Gorbachev has reached his limit as a politician?

[Shevardnadze] You know, I would not ask the question that way. I cannot say that Gorbachev has exhausted himself as a politician, so to speak, and that this era has ended. You know why? Of course, both Mikhail Sergeyevich and Shevardnadze and the others, we have all made mistakes. We have made mistakes not just in secondary ways, but in fundamental areas. There have been mistakes, major mistakes, major errors; but that is another conversation. I believe that this has to be discussed, quite clearly, and it has to be admitted quite honestly. But all the same, I believe that prospects for working toward further renewal and the forming of new relations between nations and peoples, of quite new relations between peoples, and working toward the formation of new economic relations in society, and building a rule-of-law state, in this respect the opportunities remain. Let us put it that way, the opportunities remain, the prospects exist. I believe that our president can still do a lot that is useful. What is needed? I don't think I can say anything special about this.

We are all anxious about what has happened in the Baltics and other regions, about yesterday's events in Moscow, yesterday's barricades, the hardware, the military hardware that was on show. You know, I am deeply troubled about this. It seems to me that these are very dangerous experiments. I want to make that statement publicly today. That cannot be allowed. We have not seen military hardware on Red Square since the war, apart from at parades. Probably, more trust can and must be placed in the people, including in the democratic movement. A real, honest and open dialogue with all parties, with all leaders, including with the leaders of Russia, is needed.

I don't know how we are doing for time. I would like to say a couple of words. I have been holding very many meetings recently with foreign colleagues and with representatives of the press and television. I recall our first conversations with former U.S. President Reagan. At that time he considered us— Gorbachev, myself, and others—as representatives of an evil empire. We said at that time that they were the center of world imperialism, and he was head of an imperialist state. I am not trying to make excuses for all the events, but that was the approach—our military enemy, our main military enemy. Nevertheless we started this dialogue.

Remember Geneva, how difficult a time this dialogue had? Sometimes there was a desire to get up and walk away from it all. Nevertheless, the necessary endurance was there, and a desire and aspiration to achieve a breakthrough. Indeed, just look at the level of cooperation and partnership we achieved. Now we state that we are not military enemies, that the Cold War is over, and this is the result of dialogue, the result of getting together, of constant contacts. A completely new atmosphere has formed, a new situation, one which makes it possible to construct a new policy and conduct the new policy.

Why can't we within one country, citizens and leaders of one country, sit down and discuss in a human, civilized way, as befits civilized people, members of a civilized society, the problems which worry everyone at the moment? You know, the people have grown weary, we have all grown weary of what is going on.

Esteemed leaders—and I myself am a member of this team, a former one, but still a member of this team—I don't believe that such a dialogue is impossible. It is necessary for one leader, and for the other, and for all the others to take this decisive step, to sit down seriously for a while and have a thorough discussion of all the problems that worry us all. That is the most important thing right now. Not the struggle going on between the conservatives and the others, that will probably remain, but that is a natural process. But I mean finding a common language, putting nationwide, state-wide interests to the fore, putting all kinds of ambitions and grudges to one side, and reaching serious accord. That is my international practical work which prompts me to speak out about this today in the presence of our viewers.

[Molchanov] Thank you, Eduard Amvrosiyevich. My last question: Are you more comfortable in Moscow than in Georgia?

[Shevardnadze, laughing] That's a tough one. Georgia is my beloved homeland, you know, and a normal person cannot be indifferent about his country, his homeland, his kin, his acquaintances, his friends, and so forth. All the more when—maybe this is immodest—it is a fine country, and extraordinary people.

As far as the capital of our country is concerned, I work and live here. I have many, hundreds, thousands of friends here. I don't get homesick, and I think that what I have done together with my friends and colleagues here, and what we are starting now, this too is something necessary both for Moscow, and for Russia, for Georgia, for any republic, any people.

[Molchanov] Thank you, Eduard Amvrosiyevich, and may the sympathies of millions of people be a support for you in your further work. All the best to you and your family.

[Shevardnadze] If we are talking about sympathies, may I express my particular regard for you personally, and for many, many journalists who work in the television field.

Economic

Mine Strikes Continue After Government Talks

LD0404223591 Moscow TASS in English 2151 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow April 5 TASS—Despite the fact that most economic demands by miners were met as a result of talks between Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and President Mikhail Gorbachev with representatives of miners' work collectives, strikes continue.

The new wave of stoppages was prompted by the decision to raise prices on food and consumer goods. One such strike began in Belorussia's capital of Minsk.

According to reports from Vorkuta, the strike coordination committee there decided to continue the strike there. Miners from 11 out of the total 13 collieries are striking there. Work has stopped completely at six mines.

Secretary of the city workers' strike committee Irina Minayeva told TASS today that the striking miners were dissatisfied with the decisions reached at the meeting between miners and the country's leadership. They insist on their political demands, including the early general election and the direct contested election of the Soviet president this year.

The Inta city strike committee also decided to continue the strike at the Intaugol concern.

Miners of the Pechora coal field demand that the country's government issue an official document prohibiting prosecution, punishment of, and sanctions against, participants in the current strike.

Work collectives in Vorkuta and Inta are now discussing the decisions made in Moscow. They plan to hear reports of their representatives who are expected to return from Moscow on Friday and then decide on further actions.

In Norilsk, miners at the Taymyr colliery continue their strike. Miners from the Mayak colliery joined the strike on Wednesday. However, work continues at the request from the organizing committee at some mines the operation of which is crucial for the production of nonferrous metals.

New miners' pickets have appeared in Donetsk on the passion week. Miners assemble in the city's central square not only in order to explain their demands to others but also to raise money and form a fund to help their striking mates.

Judging by this act of the Donetsk strike committee, it has no attention to call off the strike. Of 122 mines in the region, 25 have stopped all operations and some enterprises are not shipping their coal to customers.

In Minsk, capital of Belorussia, nearly 10,000 people assembled in the square in front of the government house on Thursday. The work collectives of the Minsk automobile plant, motor-bike and bicycle plant and the tractor works, as well as doctors and students took part in a mass rally which developed from the unauthorized strike which began on Wednesday.

The protest action was provoked by the price hikes and inadequate remuneration. On Thursday, protesters put forth political demands. Strikers demanded that the federal and republican governments, the Soviet president and prime minister and the Belorussian President Nikolay Dementey step down.

Reports from Barnaul say that the country's largest petrochemical plant in Alataisk, 70 per cent of whose products are usually shipped to the metallurgical enterprises of Kuzbass, has had to switch to emergency technologies. No coking coal was shipped to Kuzbass by the plant on Wednesday. The remaining coal stocks are barely enough to maintain heat in the batteries for another day. No Kuzbass fuel coal is being shipped to the Barnaul thermal power plant.

36 Donetsk Mines on Strike

LD0404131691 Kiev Domestic Service in Ukrainian 1945 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Excerpts] The work collectives of 36 coal mines in Donetsk oblast are continuing their strike. [passage omitted] Although the number of striking enterprises has dropped the strike has been joined by new collectives, including the Gorlovka Lenin colliery. [passage omitted]

In Kiev Independence Square has been filled by men in miner's helmets. They are coal miners from the Lvov-Volyinian coal basin. They are also on strike, as are the miners of other basins of the republic. [passage omitted] The whole Lvov-Volynian coal basin, all 27 collieries, are at a standstill. [passage omitted]

Norilsk Miners Go on Strike

LD0404094891 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1600 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Report by correspondent Valeriy Kravets in Norilsk]

[Text] The industrial region in Norilsk is experiencing strike disturbances again. A mass strike happened here for the first time two years ago, when miners of the Tolmak mines did not come up to the surface to attract attention to their economic problems. The first wave of strikes brought some material satisfaction, but did not relieve fundamental problems. At the beginning of January this year, the demands of the workers of the Norilsk industrial region were formulated and passed on to the government. Due to the mechanism established in administrative-command times, they were unfortunately considered slowly. Patience has come to an end. This time not only miners, but also metallurgists went out on strike. The organizing strike committee announced the beginning of the strike for the night of 3 April. But already on 27 March miners of the Taymyrskiy mine lay down—this is a term for the strike which appeared here.

On my own behalf I will say that they still chose an inconvenient time for this action, as the general director of the combine and representatives of the strike committee were in Moscow at just that time, where they were trying to solve the vital problems of the inhabitants of Norilsk in the governments of the country and of Russia. You will agree that it is better to consider these matters in a quieter situation. Nevertheless, they managed to do a lot. The USSR Cabinet of Ministers, in the person of Comrade Doguzhiyev, first deputy prime minister, made a decision with the aim of stabilizing the socioeconomic position of the workers of the Norilsk combine to increase wage rates and salaries for particular posts up to 50 percent beginning 1 May this year.

Expressing solidarity with the striking miners, the inhabitants of Norilsk are putting forward political demands as well, expressed in a demand for the resignation of the president and the Union Government. It is as though meeting economic demands to a considerable extent does not satisfy political demands. For this reason the strike tension remains. For an eighth day the Taymyrskiy mine is working only to support its own vital activity. Twenty-four hour warning strikes were announced at a number of enterprises of the combine. I have a feeling that the organizing strike committee and trade unions, having set the ball of strikes rolling, have now gotten lost, and do not know how to stop it.

Managers of enterprises as well as those same trade union leaders are at collectives at this hour, clarifying the essence of the decision by the government. I would like to believe that human dignity and the working pride of my fellow townsmen will not bring the town and the combine to disaster. But so far it remains disturbing on the Norilsk arctic parallel.

Norilsk Strikes Suspended

LD0504084691 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0700 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] In keeping with the accord reached between the Norilsk soviet of people's deputies, the administration of the Norilsk mining and metallurgical combine, and the strike organizing committee, the strike at the mining and metallurgical subdivisions has been suspended as of 0000 on 5 April. It has been decided to continue the talks

with regard to the agreement reached and the demands of the striking enterprises of the Norilsk mining and metallurgical combine to resolve social and economic problems. The working collectives of the combine's subdivisions are committing themselves to fulfilling the monthly production plans starting in May.

Political Demands Remain

LD0404211791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1930 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Agebekov]

[Text] Moscow, 4 Apr (TASS)—Negotiations have failed between representatives of miners' strike committees and the USSR president and prime minister on ending the miners' strike; the strike will continue. This was stated at a news conference of representatives of the coordination council of strike committees that took place in Moscow today. Igor Kochkov, leader of the Federation of Russian Independent Trade Unions (FITU), and Pavel Shushpanov, leader of the miners' independent trade union, also took part in the conference.

Participants of the news conference stressed the political demands—the resignation of the USSR president and the country's government and the disbanding of the Union parliament. In the opinion of a number of those who spoke, the Russian parliament, whose leadership is calling those on strike to come under the jurisdiction of the republics, is unable to resolve the miners' problems.

Speaking at the news conference, FITU Chairman Igor Kochkov reconfirmed once again that the Russian Independent Trade Unions will support the miners' strike, having noted that FITU has been and will be providing moral and material support for them.

Anatoliy Malykhin, member of the coordination committee representing an interregional strike committee and a miner from Kuzbass, read a statement adopted by striking regions. It was handed to President Mikhail Gorbachev today. "Decisions and instructions issued by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers as a result of the meeting," the document says, "have not fully resolved even the demands of the agreed protocols of 1989." The statement stresses the need to carry out all the strikers' demands.

Reasons for Continuing Strikes Given

PM0504135391

[Editorial Report] Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 April 1991 Second Edition carries on page 3 under the general heading "Strikes Continue" a roundup of reports, which read in their entirety as follows.

TASS report:

"Vorkuta

"A decision not to end the strike for the time being was taken yesterday by the Vorkuta strike coordinating council.

"As I. Minayev, secretary of the Vorkuta City Strike Committee, stated, the strikers are not satisfied with the decisions taken at the meeting in Moscow between miners and USSR President M.S. Gorbachev and government head V.S. Pavlov. They continue to insist on the fulfillment of their political demands, which include early new elections for USSR people's deputies and the holding of a contested election for the country's president."

PRAVDA correspondent N. Mironov report:

"Dnepropetrovsk

"Four out of eleven mines in the western Donbass are still on strike. Republic Council of Ministers Chairman V. Fokin came to talk with metallurgy workers in Dnepropetrovsk last week. He delegated his deputy, V. Gladush, to go to see miners in Pavlograd.

"The miners continue to insist that their strike is a resumption of the 1989 strike. They have therefore appealed against the oblast court ruling that it is illegal.

"The unsatisfied demands include retirement on pension after 20 years of underground service irrespective of age. They have asked that wages be adjusted in line with the growth in the general index of prices and a number of other factors. But no common language was found on any of these questions, since, as V. Gladush stated, he is not authorized to tackle them."

PRAVDA correspondent B. Glotov:

"Donetsk

"'We are not satisfied with the results of the talks between the leaders of the country and government and miners,' A. Tupikin, member of the 'Donetskugol' association strike committee, said. 'Why has there already been a multiple increase in prices on food and industrial goods while a twofold increase in wages for miners is promised only from 1 April 1992? We do not agree with such a proposal.'

"The Donbass miners decided therefore to continue their strike, and their political and economic demands remain as before. Some striking collectives at the 'Donetskugol,' 'Makeyevugol,' and 'Krasnoarmeyskugol' associations have adopted an implacable stance. According to the figures of the 'Donetskugol' association strike committee, 50 mines and several mining engineering administrations in the Ukrainian Donbass (Donetsk, Lugansk, and Dnepropetrovsk Oblasts) were either completely or partially out of operation on 4 April."

PRAVDA's roundup continues with a V. Loktev report:

"Kemerovo

"Trains left the Kuzbass for the European part of the country with their freightcars empty yesterday. For more than two weeks 12,000 open-top cars had lain idle waiting to load coal. By order of the Ministry of Railways they are being driven to other regions to transport timber, construction materials, equipment...

"The Kuzbass miners continue to strike. Yesterday 45 out of 76 mines were not working here. Because of interruptions to supplies of coal the Altay Coke By-Product Plant has had to switch over to emergency equipment. And yet 70 percent of Altay coke goes to Kuzbass metallurgy workers.

"Supplies of Kuzbass coal to the Barnaul TETS-2 [heat and electric power station] have also stopped and other Altay cities and villages are only receiving half the coal they were getting. For two weeks now the leadership of the Altay Kray Soviet has been holding talks with miners, but there has been no progress made to date."

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent V. Zhdanko and PRAVDA correspondent A. Ulitenok report:

"Minsk

"The strike wave, which had hitherto spared Belorussia, has now reached our relatively stable republic.

"The strike, which began on 3 April at four major Minsk enterprises—an automatic production line machine plant and tractor, electrical engineering, and gear wheel plants—took on a new dimension yesterday. Many workers at automobile and engine plants quit their machine-tool work stations. Columns of people wearing work overalls have since morning stretched in their thousands along the capital's central thoroughfare, the Prospekt Lenina, in the direction of Government House.

"What are the strikers seeking? They want increased wages and compensation in line with the growth in retail prices, the revocation of the 'presidential tax,' and a 15-percent reduction in the amount paid into the state budget from enterprises' profits.

"At the same time they make a number of political demands—the resignation of the USSR president, the chairman of the republic Supreme Soviet, and the union and republic governments, the dissolution of the Congress of RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] People's Deputies and the Belorussian Supreme Soviet, plus other demands...

"So, what next? It is still to be hoped that the Minsk strike committee will promptly start talks with the government and that a strike spiral will not start developing, painfully afflicting everyone, right and left, and particularly those who went out onto the square not out of political ambition but for the sake of a slice of bread on the table."

PRAVDA correspondent S. Brovashov report:

"Perm

"Two out of the fourteen mines of the 'Kizelugol' production association have begun a strike. B. Morozov, general director of the association, considers that there is no direct connection here with the actions of striking collectives in other regions. Simply the menu in the canteens in the 'Shumikhinskaya' and 'Sorokaletiye Oktyabrya' mines, as, incidentally, in other mines, has been reduced to pearl barley kasha. For the time being Kizel coal miners' representatives have been taking part in talks with the government, and the general director has invited to Kizel senior comrades from oblast departments and services, ranging from the ispolkom [executive committee] to trade. The question has been put directly: The miners supply 80 percent of their output to the oblast and are meeting all their commitments, consequently they are entitled to count on a more or less normal supply of products."

Ryabev, Schadov Hold News Conference

LD0404185291 Moscow TASS in English 1739 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—Compromise on economic demands of striking miners has been reached at the talks between representatives of labour collectives and the union leadership, Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Lev Ryabev has reported. He spoke at a press conference here today, together with Soviet Minister of the Coal Industry Mikhail Shchadov.

Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, senior executives of coal mines and about 200 delegates from miners' collectives took part in the two-day talks that ended on Wednesday. President Gorbachev took part in the concluding stage of the talks.

The social situation is complicated in mining regions, Ryabev pointed out at the press conference. He said that now 118 mines were on strike. They continue to put forward both economic and political demands. These include a wage increase by 2-2.5 times, the indexation of wages in accordance with the growth of prices and the granting of a number of social privileges. Political demands include the resignation of the president and the government, as well as the dissolution of the Union parliament.

Ryabev said that the damage inflicted by the strikes is running into billions of roubles.

According to the deputy prime minister, the sides agreed that wages would be raised by stages, along with the growth of the effectiveness of production. All documents adopted at the Wednesday meeting were signed by representatives of the miners and the prime minister.

Touching upon the political demands, Ryabev said that they were discussed with the participation of the president. The miners were told that those problems should be resolved within the framework of the law and on a constitutional basis.

Minister of the Coal Industry Shchadov said that meetings of miners with representatives of the government and the management of the industry are continuing. "It would be too hasty to believe that the miners will resume work immediately after the meeting," the minister said. At the same time, he pointed to a trend towards the reduction of the number of striking mines and mineworkers.

Responding to the question about the role of head of the Russian parliament Boris Yeltsin in the settlement of a number of economic problems, including miners' strikes, Shchadov said that appeals for the strikes had been coming from the Yeltsin team. "I would strongly request not to use the miners' issue for attaining one's goals. We shall resolve this problem ourselves," he pointed out.

More on News Conference

LD0504135691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Apr 91

[News conference by USSR Deputy Prime Minister Lev Ryabev and USSR Coal Industry Minister Mikhail Shchadov with unidentified correspondents in Moscow on 4 April; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] A news conference for Soviet and foreign journalists was devoted to the government's meeting with miners. USSR Deputy Prime Minister Ryabev acquainted those gathered with the social situation in mining regions. He noted that there do exist grounds for dissatisfaction and for the raising economic matters, and these could be put to right quickly and completely. USSR Coal Industry Minister Shchadov spoke about the situation to date in the industry:

[Shchadov] The number of mines idle or participating in the strike movement is falling both in the morning and on the second shift.

[Correspondent] Everyone was interested in how much the country and the industry have lost during the strike.

[Shchadov] To date, the losses of the coal industry in coal extraction amount to 6.87 million tonnes. Particularly large losses have arisen at Kuzbass mines—2.3 million tonnes—and at Donbass mines—2.5 million tonnes. We have lost considerable profits over this time, more than 500 million rubles [R], and the most unpleasant thing is that we have lost R117 million from the wages fund.

[Correspondent] Our coal industry is gigantic in scale, and for that reason, the minister replied about help for miners in the course of the strike in this way:

[Shchadov] Whatever help is given, you will not feed the miners with this help, and the collection going on among the population count for very little when you take into account that the wages fund in the industry is more than R10 billion. We thus have nothing against it if in those collectives or republics they want to give miners some sort of help—but I think that there is more propaganda trickery in this than real help.

[Correspondent] Asked if an instant solution is possible for the problem, as in statements made by certain political leaders, the deputy prime minister replied:

[Ryabev] Sometimes calls are to be heard for a rapid solution to this or that problem without a deep-going examination and assessmeent of what needs to be undertaken and what it entails. Sometimes, and often in the press, they call Resolution 608, adopted after the June strikes of 1989, false, a fraud, the notorious resolution, and so on.

I can give you some figures: in 1991 the value of it is R3.5 billion in pensions, holidays, night-shift payments, so-called (?productivity) [khodovoy] payments, and the sharply increased program of socio-economic and housing construction. With the preliminary assessments of the agreements which took shape yesterday, as I have said, the first stage will require R2 billion. In order to produce serious improvements in housing conditions in mining regions, R28 billion is required, and this will take about 15 years. One can ask from these figures: What efforts can be made in what stages, by what dates; how is it possible to resolve quickly everything that has built up over the decades which have passed?

Agreement With Miners Outlined

LD0404165391 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 4 Apr 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] How to solve the miners' problems, and how to come to a common agreement: this was the subject of two days of talks between the miners and the government. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev himself addressed the miners and replied to questions.

The acute and difficult debate in the Kremlin was useful and necessary. It at least enabled mutual understanding to be found. One of the more fundamental results was the agreement on a Cabinet of Ministers' decision on measures for a graduated wage increase for workers in the coal-and-shale industry in 1991-92. So, in April-June of this year it will increase by 25 percent; in July-September by 50 percent; and in October-December by 75 percent. In January-March of next year it will have doubled.

The doubling of wages should, at the same time, facilitate an increase in coal extraction in 1992 to 711 million tons.

It has been considered necessary to conclude in the first half of this year a tariff agreement for next year. It is due to provide for the inclusion of increments and extra payments to the basic wage rates of a compensatory nature, the establishment of wage levels taking into account the regional coefficient and the lifting of wage restrictions to which the regional coefficient is added.

During the preparation of a tariff agreement the procedure and rate of indexation of workers' incomes will be examined.

There were long arguments about granting workers' collectives the right to look after part of the production. It was decided as follows: to allow enterprises in the coal industry to maket up to seven percent of power-generating and up to five percent of coking coal from the overall volume at contractual prices on the domestic and foreign markets.

Professions which give the right to retire irrespective of age, on condition that one has been employed in such work fc. no less than 25 years, will also supplement the list of jobs in a substantial way. At the same time, the demands of the miners have been fully taken into account.

The right has been granted to free transport to any part of the country once every three years for workers from the regions of the Far North and the Far East, and from other localities of equal distance. The benefits have also been extended to two members of the families of these workers.

Well, comrades, you will be able to read in more detail in the press about other agreements which were reached.

Pavlov on Strike Agreeement

PM0404203991 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 5 Apr 91 p 1

[Interview with USSR Prime Minister V. Pavlov by correspondent Aleksandr Krotkov in Moscow 3 April: "Valentin Pavlov: Never Promise What You Cannot Deliver"]

[Text] On Wednesday evening, immediately after agreement was reached in the Kremlin between the Union Government and the miners on terms for ending their strike, our correspondent asked USSR Prime Minister V. Pavlov to comment on the compromise that had just been reached.

[Pavlov] It has to be said that the talks were difficult. We did not differentiate between the miners in terms of their political beliefs and we did not choose the most compliant for the talks. The government put complete trust in the labor collectives, who chose their own representatives.

Our only condition was that anyone coming to Moscow must have the authority to make decisions which the collective that had chosen him would agree to implement. No matter whether it was a representative of an "official" trade union or an "independent" member of a strike committee or of the Union of Labor Collectives, an engineer or miner.

So it was people with quite different views who assembled in the Kremlin. Some were making exclusively political demands, others exclusively economic demands. Many had come thinking that if the economic demands were not met it would be a direct confirmation that the only way to eliminate the conflict was to solve the question of political power.

[Krotkov] So you tried to show that the economic questions are entirely solvable, so that therefore the political demands are not as vital and acute as they sometiomes appear?

[Pavlov] I would not say that the political questions are not that acute. I would put it another way: The political demands have sprung up as a result of dissatisfaction over economic problems. And everyone, including the government, is unhappy with this situation.

I hope that I was able to convince the miners that mutually acceptable solutions can be achieved not through another "black partition" [reference to late 19th century Russian populist movement advocating mass agitation and propaganda and land seizure and partition by peasants] but by increasing the country's national resources, which would give everyone, and them in particular, a better life. The miners kept saying: "Increase our pay by 100-150 percent!" We are even prepared to treble it. But the country has to receive the output—coal, in this case—which is the only basis on which real wages and social benefits can be ensured for the coalminers.

[Krotkov] How come you have been so accommodating in permitting the miners' associations to dispose of five-seven percent of the coal they produce irrespective of whether they carry our deliveries under basic contracts? After all, until the last moment Mikhail Shchadov was refusing to accept the demand that would enable the miners to trade abroad, even if they cut coal production by one-half...

[Pavlov] It is the government's long-standing aim to get our country integrated in the world economic community. The fact that we are unfortunately starting integration with our traditional raw material resources is another matter. A mechanism is needed that would target miners' coal sales not abroad but on our own steelworkers. So that the latter are exporting not raw material but a more expensive product, sharing part of the hard currency earnings with the miners.

We intend to have this mechanism operating by next year. I agree that it should have been in operation this year, but it would have involved severing all the intra-economic links already in place. I fear it would have been folly to rush such an operation.

[Krotkov] So miners' pay is going to be increased by stages. Don't you fear that the steelworkers and many others will be lining up for a similar raise, using the proven strike method for safety's sake?

[Pavlov] We make no secret of the fact that the increase in miners' pay is the first stage in a pay reform in the country, which was part of the Cabinet of Ministers program before the strike began. The miners' pay raise will be followed by one for steelworkers, chemical workers, and so on. There will be a switch to a system of wage rate agreements with workers in all sectors.

[Krotkov] So what lessons should the new government draw from the strike? Shouldn't you have sat down with the miners at the negotiating table much earlier?

[Pavlov] It is most unfortunate, but once again we demonstrated that we are bad at predicting the development of the economic and sociopolitical situation in the country. Indeed, about two years ago it was suggested that the USSR Supreme Soviet legislatively regulate ways of tackling not only strikers' economic demands but political demands too. However, the legislators said at the time that there could not be any political strikes in the USSR. And all we got was a law on labor disputes.

As a result, in March we had no idea at all on what juridical basis the premier was supposed to discuss with the strikers the whole package of demands. I was simply compelled to reply merely that I was prepared only to talk about economics and with people who were working. To which the answer was: But we do not intend to meet with you, because we are demanding your resignation, the dissolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and so on.

[Krotkov] If a similar situation were to occur in the future, God forbid, would you choose the same line of action or not?

[Pavlov] Hard to say. To a very large extent the present conflict was provoked by unrealistic promises to the coalminers and, as a result, efforts to forget them, to pretend they did not exist. This is the kind of position that must be prevented from recurring at all costs. Then, I hope, there will simply be no cause for indignant rebellion.

IZVESTIYA on Miners' Talks

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[Report by V. Romanyuk: "Economic Demands Will Be Met. But Will Miners Return to Work?]

[Text] Late on the evening of 3 April 1991 a meeting between representatives of the miners' collectives and the USSR Cabinet of Ministers ended in the Kremlin's Sverdlovskiy Hall. The outcome of the two-day discussion was the elaboration of documents geared to implementing the miners' main demands.

Coordinated decisions were adopted on the key questions.

Coal industry working people's pay will double (by stages over one year).

Miners' collectives are granted the right to sell at contract prices on the domestic and foreign markets seven percent of the fuel coal and five percent of the coking coal that is produced.

The list of occupations that are entitled to preferential pensions has been amended.

The miners of the Far North and the Far East are now entitled to free travel three times a year (with two family members).

And although some of the delegations said that they were not happy with the terms, the majority were satisfied with the adopted decisions. At any rate, the miners are not going back to their collectives empty-handed.

The following morning, swapping impressions with the miners on the dialogue, I heard many strong opinions about the government. My interlocutors were sure that the central departments had long since analyzed their demands and the position only had to be clarified. But it appeared that the prime minister had no answers to many of the questions, and the usual game of setting up various commissions and subcommissions had begun. There was even the fear that the miners would have to go away with nothing.

But, on the day, the work was very specifically targeted. Soon the miners' collectives' representatives went with Coal Industry Minister M. Shchadov and representatives of the Cabinet of Ministers to another room to draw up decisions on the miners' main demands. It was expected that they would submit a package of agreed documents after the lunch break. However, it was not until the evening that the package was presented.

The debate went on in the Sverdlovskiy Hall while the package was being prepared. Deputy Prime Minister L. Ryabev painted a by and large optimistic picture of the implementation of the two-year-old government resolution No. 608, geared to the implementation of the striking miners' initial demands. The report was greeted without applause, to put it mildly. A great deal had been implemented on paper, but in fact little had changed.

V. Solnyshkin, miner at the "Intaugol" Association, expressed bewilderment: The deputy premier reports that everything is fine, yet the miners' living standard continues to decline, and shelves are empty, although according to Ryabev there is more food and there are more goods. Housing construction is chronically behind schedule and many social questions are unresolved. In fact, production is lame in both legs: There is a shortage of pit props, hawsers, pipes, and rolled metal. Solnyshkin said that the government has to take responsibility for the strikes that began in March and refuse to prosecute the participants.

This was the theme of many speeches. Answering them all at one go, V. Palvov gave assurances that the government did not intend to prosecute anyone. But it did not intend to pay for the strike either. The miners will have to settle their relations with consumers themselves, and the miners accepted this.

There was another very strong motif in the representatives' speeches: The economic demands they have made are the final frontier. If they are not met, political demands will be made. "I appeal to the government," one speaker said. "Do not lead the country into a general political strike!"

As for the political demands, whereas on day one it was often claimed that economic results would not be achieved without political demands being met, on day two it was different: A change of leadership would achieve nothing; the existing structures must be made to work.

A great deal was said on this day of bitter words about the dire situation of the inhabitants of the coalfields: the miners' meager ration (20 grams of meat a day, 11 grams of groats, 25 grams of fat, one egg every three days, no cheese or butter), the economic decline in the regions, the old shacks in which miners' families are forced to live. There was also the well-known difference between the approaches of the collectives of striking and non-striking mines. The former put forward more radical demands, including political demands; the latter concentrated more on practical questions (material resources, foodstuffs, miners' "bait" and so on).

P. Pastukhov of Neryungri, with whom we are already familiar, proposed a moratorium on strikes for the whole of 1991. The reaction to this was varied. It would be an exaggeration to say that the discussion was entirely constructive. At least half an hour was spent on deciding why the prime minister had not gone to Vorkuta despite promising to do so.

The debate was obviously flagging by the end of the day. Speaker followed speaker, but the miners appeared to be paralyzed, waiting for the emissaries to prepare a package of measures agreed with the government. Finally, the representative of the associations and fields appeared in the hall. Coal Industry Minister M. Shchadov, hoarse by now, read out the text of the agreed documents point by point. Then some of those who had only just initialed the documents refused to sign them. But the excitement soon abated. In principle the miners agreed to a staged increased in pay.

There was a fierce debate about how much coal would remain at the disposal of the collectives for sale at contract prices on the domestic and foreign markets and on what terms. The amounts were quickly agreed: seven percent of fuel coal and five percent of coking coal. That worked out at 40 million tonnes a year. There was something else that gave rise to objections: Originally the draft stated that it could apply only to coal produced in excess of the state plan and state order. The miners rejected this condition, since it obviously deprived them of the chance to enjoy this right.

"Only on top of the plan," M. Shchadov insisted. "Or no pay." Whereupon the atmosphere became even hotter. It appeared that the very possibility of a compromise was in jeopardy. Prime Minister V. Pavlov saw this and took up his pen and within a minute he was reading out a formula that suited everyone: It would start from the total volume of coal actually produced and sold. The Cabinet of Ministers will allocate this year from the contingency fund 15 million rubles [R] to compensate for miners' earnings which are hit by progressive taxation. The USSR State Planning Committee and State Committee for Material and Technical Supply are instructed to allocate extra resources to the USSR Coal Industry Ministry for the construction of housing, social-cultural and municipal facilities in miners' cities and settlements in accordance with the target set by government Resolution No. 608. Similar instructions were given, relating to the production sphere. Measures were also elaborated on social protection for working people in the coal and slate industry as part of the retail price reform. Compensation was set for all categories of working people (between R60 and R105 per month, depending on labor conditions).

They agreed to duplicate all the agreed documents so that the meeting participants could familiarize their labor collectives with the details. Toward the end of the day, when the discussion of the miners' economic demands was coming to an end, USSR President M. Gorbachev joined in the discussion.

It has to be said that the tone of the speeches hardened again. Some demanded the resignation of the president and the dissolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet. RSFSR People's Deputy A. Baronenko from Kopeysk said that transformations must not be carried out in the economy by instinct alone, that we must not move toward the market without creating the prerequisities. Now we are having to start the economic transformations with a most unpopular increase in prices. There was also mention of the government's criminal tardiness—the cause of the strikes that have flared up all over the place.

The president addressed the miners, saying that the question of the USSR president's resignation and the Supreme Soviet's dissolution must be resolved constitutionally—all the mechanisms for this exist.

Responding to his opponents, M. Gorbachev described as "cheap populism" statements by those who accuse the country's leadership of being incapable of forecasting the development of events or mastering the situation. After all, even the miners themselves have not yet worked out what kind of sector structure suits them best: Should the ministry be eliminated? And what about a vast country which has 15 republics and 120 ethnic groups?

There have been mistakes, M. Gorbachev admitted, and they might have been fewer. But even the academics

from S. Shatalin's team say that, if you consider all the actual circumstances, the readiness of the various strata of the population for transformations, and the leadership's level of competence, then the path that has been trodden is the most likely one.

Describing the current stage of perestroyka, M. Gorbachev analyzed various approaches relating to future steps. It is necessary to follow the chosen path firmly, otherwise the country could be plunged into chaos and the only way out would be dictatorship. The president warned the meeting participants about the danger of the attempts by certain poliical circles to play the "miners' card." We have a chance to extricate ourselves, he said, and we do not want to change the course of reforming the system.

Ending the meeting, the USSR president said that the acute and difficult debate in the Kremlin had been useful and necessary. It has not divided us, he said, but has deepened mutual understanding. There can be no neglecting the miners' problems—that is clear. But they cannot all be solved at once, because there are enough difficulties in the country as it is.

"I want to say to all miners," M. Gorbachev said in conclusion: "Let us get down to some practical work, comrades. If we get involved in political battles and rallies we are going to find it hard going. This has to be appreciated.... We are all in the same boat—let us row in the same direction."

So the representatives of the miners' collectives go back to their regions and their workers' settlements. The main question—whether the miners will go back to work—remains unclear. At any rate, no one at the meeting said anything about this. In fact, after all the documents had been agreed it was said that by no means everyone was satisfied. The miners say that not enough coal is being allocated for sale at contract prices and the question of "miners' bait" remains unresolved... Time will tell whether the accord the USSR president called for will finally be achieved.

Text of Gorbachev Address to Miners

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[Speech by President Mikhail Gorbachev at a meeting with miners' representatives in Moscow on 3 April—recorded]

[Text] I think that two results are evident. The first result: A significant number of those comrades who have arrived here with the authorization of their mining collectives have been involved in a lot of work together with the government, and have come to the resolution of those questions which can be resolved in the specific conditions of the present socio-economic situation.

Another matter: You have questions and demands and I am sure that probably 90 percent, or a minimum of 80 percent, of them are justified. They should be studied, but I think there are limits to the government's options in every given situation. And whoever you put there, even if you shoot them, even if you put them up against the wall, even if you yourselves join the government, nonetheless, you will do the same, because there is a limit. This is also economics. It is not like a balloon. [sentence as heard] If you keep blowing it up, it bursts if you blow it up excessively. So there is a limit.

In connection with this, I welcome, above all, the constructive work which has been carried out here. First, it has economic and social significance. It also has political significance, because the miners' contact with the government is continuing; contact which is not proceeding simply and easily, but which is necessary. You cannot get away from the fact that both sides have to hear each other out and find solutions. Therefore, I welcome this first result.

The second result is particularly manifest in my presence here. It is from that corner of the speeches, from one corner this applause. It is a group of persons who even before this meeting and at this meeting continue with one thing, carrying out a political task. That is their business. That is their business. I can already see familiar faces. I see them faily often, just as it is known already who will speak at Manezhnaya Square rallies; so in your ranks, the miners should see this. There are also specialists in this business. They have been in the mines for a long time. They have been in the mines a long time. They have probably forgotten a lot already, but this they have learned. They can even speak without papers, but even more with papers prepared in certain circles.

First, nevertheless, I will answer the resignation question. About my resignation: In this respect, I should first and foremost express my thanks for those arguments which show the touching concern that I enter history as a great reformer. Well, thanks for that, you have remembered at least that. That is already something, as they say. That's one. Thank you for the concern that I should enter history rather than fall flat on my face in it. That's one.

Second, as far as the principle of the issue of the president's resignation is concerned, as well as the appearance of the presidency and the president, everything has been decided by the Constitution and certain laws. There are no infringements here whatsoever, and hints at the juridical area are inappropriate. They only demonstrate political demagogy, specially calculated to provoke, to stir up, and, the main thing, break Gorbachev's stride. It will not succeed. And this will not work. It will not. That's the second aspect.

Three, there is the constitutional road. The congresses meet regularly. Just at the last congress a question was raised by Deputy Umalatova about confidence or nonconfidence in the president. There is nothing new here. The congress voted and rejected the question, not even

including it on the agenda. Thus, there is the constitutional road and we have to go along that road.

Do you think that a man who has moved away from the mode of power which was concentrated in the hands of the general secretary, and which was delegated to him neither through universal democratic elections nor through constitutional forms, through the constitution, but through the fact of being elected only by 20 million, and not even 20 million but through a well-known, let's say...

[Unidentified speaker] Arrangement.

[Gorbachev] ...arrangement; that man had everything. At least I too became a holder of that office. At that time no sovereign in the world, not even a junta leader, had more power than the CPSU Central Committee general secretary. And if I have gone along the road of restructuring all this too had to be decided deliberately. That is what my choice consists of. And I shall come back to this. Society has to be changed. We have to go toward a new society, where the law, the institutions, and the constitutional order operate. Otherwise we will never get out of this. There is the legislative authority, there is the executive authority, there is the judicial authority. If all this starts to work properly, there will be a law-governed state which will strongly defend the constitutional order and the only basis of life on which a normal society can rest. If there is another order, there will be new appanage princes, there will be a telephone law, no constitution but debauchery through and through.

In exactly the same way I want to say that whatever stamping, whatever whistling, whatever slogans may be heard, whatever mocking may come from the squares, it will not break my stride. There is a constitutional process. The people will decide. And these people are lawfully elected, plenipotentiary repesentatives, and they will decide what they need and who they need. That's the answer to your first question.

And the second question which requires an immediate answer. Why didn't you anticipate and prevent such a development of perestroyka processes?

During the break, one miner, Comrade Rudolf Nikolayevich Panishin, elaborated on what was said earlier. Other comrades asked the same question. It was essential to anticipate things.

Dear Rudolf Nikolayevich, I just do not understand why you were not able to figure out how to get and actually implement the right of the coal industry to be independent and to show initiative in the past two or three years, when you had our support and our sympathy. How? At the level of the mine, at the level of the association. Do you need the ministry? What sort of ministry? Do you need the association? But you did nothing. Half of you demand the abolition of the coal ministry. Others, especially in Kuzbass, when the vice president went there, have declared that if the coal ministry is abolished, all of the Kuzbass will go on strike. If you cannot figure out what to do with one mine, and you need time so you won't botch it, so miners and their families, and miners in the future, won't find themselves on the losing side, then tell me: Is there another way to conduct business in a country with a population of 300 million, 120 peoples, and now more than 15 republics? Should we, having started perestroyka and the renewal, having concluded this society needs renewal, do everything at once? Should we decide everything, and seek answers to everything? Fast answers are the most dangerous thing. That is the cheapest form of populism.

Further, in order to refrain from referring to why we did not foresee many things, and why we have allowed mistakes to be made—and this is really so, there are miscalculations—I will not refer to myself. Only today, I received a letter that contained an article by a doctor of economic sciences, Comrade Yasin, who was a member of Shatalin's team, and who was engaged in drawing up the 500 days plan. I know Comrade Yasin personally, and work with him fruitfully, getting him actively involved. He is now involved in the work of the team which is preparing the action program for getting out of the crisis. Anyway, he is from Shatalin's team, which most speakers here accept and value very highly. Here is what he is writing.

If one takes 1985 as a point of reference, then the path which we have taken is far from the optimum one. The economic and social costs could have been substantially less. That is in response to whether it was possible to foresee things or not. They could have been substantially less. I agree with this. But further, if one takes into account the sum total of the actual circumstances, including the readiness of various strata for transformations, including yours, the competence of the leadership, from here downward to your colliery leadership, as it were, and so forth, this path which we have pursued can be considered the most likely. And, if one thinks abut it, it was hard to expect anything else. The first two years were devoted to breaking negative trends with old methods. It did not work. Now voices are sometimes heard: We shouldn't have changed anything. The system had defects, but, nonetheless, it worked. Moreover, they somehow forget that it was working worse and worse, that problems were literally protruding from all sides, urgently demanding resolution, and it had long become clear that they couldn't be resolved within the framework of the system, because they were its congenital vice.

In the middle of 1987, the realization of the need for radical economic reform became apparent. However, it was only thought of in terms of the extension of the independence of enterprises. Production democracy, self management, combination of plan and market economy—that is, within the framework of an interim model, without profound transformations of ownership and the political system. In theory, such a model is detrimental, since it lacks integrity. It is ineffective. This is clear to the specialists, but for us it was in some sense vital, as a kind of shift of consciousness, incapable of immediately breaking away from what we had become accustomed to.

Here I am reading someone else's words, but I am ready to put my signature under them. Here there is condemnation of me and an assessment of everyone, but, after all, this is so. We are, you see, carrying out changes, a transfer, perestroyka, in a real society, where people are used to commands, to simplified forms of organization of economic life, where there is unwarranted levelling of wages, and unwarranted pay and bonus levels are set.

However, comrades, that has all existed and still exists. Then—I do not want to read it out further, because it really coincides with what I want to go on to say to you—then we saw that nothing is achieved. The structure resists changes in economic life. Resistance is shown by this system, by the ministries and everything connected with them—by the entire cadre corps, and so on.

There is the need for a new taxation system, since we ourselves have embarked on defining for ourselves—we have already obtained the price—and on defining earnings. But a taxation system is not in place. The banks are operating under the guidance of the government and are pressing for more money to be printed, and so on.

Then we reached the conclusion that without changing this system nothing will be achieved and we will end up simply bankrupt. Then there was a party conference and then there was political reform, and we moved in this direction.

What is to be done now? There are two viewpoints. One viewpoint—and its author, Comrade Yasin, in the note that he sent me, informs us that there are two paths—one path, nevertheless, again, so to speak, involves stabilizing the economy and economic links by pursuing a structural policy especially in the basic industries and by boosting machine-building; then, by this and through enthusiasm and scientific and technological progress, to proceed on to different results, a different productivity and national income and, naturally, to profit, earnings, and everything else.

We have now come to a time where it is now necessary to embark on sterner measures, first and foremost by a stiffening up of all financial matters. This means moving toward a freeing and liberalizing of prices. The market must become balanced. It means sternly taking the budget and returning to it again in order to reduce all expenditure on all items. It is painfully difficult. It is necessary to tell people about this bluntly, and if people accept it then it will be clear that through this...[changes thought] but let me tell you that this will mean tens of thousands of unemployed, tens of millions of unemployed.

It is said that Gorbachev is afraid of this and will not stand the strain, but in my opinion it is first of all not because Gorbachev will not stand the strain. That is not the point. We consider that we shall adopt this path or another. True, Comrade Yasin says that if we do not embark on this second course these sick processes will go on for a long time, wearing the people out, and that will lead to chaos, and that then a dictatorship will begin to take shape which will again lead to the most far from economic methods, to methods of administrative regulation, and that this will knock out the country for decades.

There are also opinions that everything should return to harsh commands. There are such comrades. They think we should go right back to presidential running of the economy for the whole country in all industries. All of this exists.

Those are the options, a wide range of opinions. I should say that in general these should be studied in a normal manner and compared since this is the fate of the country and of all of us. But in this country this is being mixed up with political struggle, with a struggle for and claims to power. In this connection, I should say, and do not take this amiss, many people would like to play the miners' card—[people think:] you know what the miners are. They are a resolute bunch of people with a strong will. They are organized people. You know what coal means for the country. And this is already operating. The metallurgical industry is breaking down and consequently so is machine-building, and the economy in general. So, things come to a halt. So there are stoppages. So there are no wages. There are no profits. There are no allocations to the budget. The country falls to pieces. And then, all the same, we'll arrive at the same thing: The most cruel dictatorship always grows from chaos. From a 94-percent fall in the economy and industrial decline, that regime was born in Germany in 1932. People driven to desperation are ready to accept any, even the most cruel, power. And with the other aspirations based on "Mein Kampf" present there, it resulted in the tragedy for the Germans and for all peoples.

So I think that we still have a chance in this situation. With all the dangers and all the difficulties, we have chances of pulling through. We do not want to change either our course or the general policy directed toward radical economic reform and the reform of the union state, toward the reform of the political system and the creation of a law-governed state. All these policy directions still remain. Now it is necessary and important to keep the economy from disintegrating and sliding into chaos and to continue moving along the path of the transformations. The program which we are drawing up is a program of practical actions. We are not changing our program and our course.

These will be specific things from the point of view of supporting the economy in order to prevent the breakdown of economic links. Such possibilities exist.

In agriculture, in spite of all the difficulties, we are now doing everything as a priority to cover the requirements of this sector inspite of all the shortages and to satisfy them. Not all of the requirements. But, nonetheless-...[changes thought]

And finally, the third direction, to move forward the processes of liberalizing our economic life, the transition to new forms of economic management, to move toward

a mixed economy, to do everything now that is within our power, because this path is a long one, let us say this straight out: Anyone who thinks that privatization in the country can be carried out in one year is simply an adventurer—to move forward medium-sized businesses and to move forward the services sector, to move forward people's initiative on the land in order, in the first instance, to create an increase in goods, because the market in goods is today the most important one.

But it is clear that without the basic industries everything and all plans will collapse. The basic industries can bring everything, the whole country, to its knees in three months—in one month even.

In connection with this, I shall say a few words later about the mutual understanding which is simply essential to us, but I shall finish my present thoughts. And so, on the 8th we should have this specific program. On the 12th we are convening a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers with the participation of the chairmen of the republican Councils of Ministers to study it so as to publish it in full in mid-April. It will contain a specific set of proposals and people will be able to judge. But I should say that this will be a painful program. It cannot be painless. I think that you understand this, comrades, it cannot be painless. Everything should be told like it is, in the way it turns out, and people should accept it. If anyone proves that there is a different program which is more effective—well, it is possible, so to say—or if there are some additional measures then, undoubtedly they should be included. Everything should be done so that we can rapidly integrate now, everything that is capable, so to say, of changing the situation for the better, all of this should be included in this anticrisis program. It will be drawn up for the year, and as a preparation for 1992. Such is the scale of it. In other words, it will be drawn up literally quarter by quarter, and in places even month by month.

Well, to conclude the subject of our relations with you, I consider at that moment, that one and a half years ago, everything was done correctly. Everything was done correctly. It was impossible not to react to the harsh demand that was voiced.

You know what I said. I said that I was against such extreme methods, and so on. Nevertheless, we must take these demands of the miners very seriously. But if something doesn't work out—and a lot may not work out—if we fail in our task because together we don't know how to sort things out, if output in the country falls, if output of metal, timber, and other things puts us in a tight spot, we will not be able to meet your demands either. But this is not a premeditated policy. This is also the impact of this hard and difficult situation, a situation in which we are experiencing a slump and even disruption of our national economy.

Therefore, as regards everything that is relevant, everything which you stated, we immediately said that we would study all questions pertaining to the economy, to production and social matters, that we would resolve all the things which are possible and necessary, but within the context of our possibilities. But you must bear one thing in mind. There are requests from everybody, from the representatives, from the metallurgical workers, from the chemical workers, from the teachers, from the military, from the militia, from everybody. This simply testifies that we must achieve different results in production, in boosting the national income, so that we can develop this country. That is the policy we have adopted. We will carry it out. That is all. I think the path we have chosen is the path that must be followed, no matter how difficult it may be.

If anybody thinks that somebody thought this up, dreamed up some stupid experiment, got it into his head to show off his ego, that, comrades, is just as much a delusion. It is stupid to think this way. In some cases it is ill-intentioned slander, intended to blacken people's names. Life has brought us to this stage in the development of society. There's no getting away from it. It was necessary to start changing things. So, we began making changes. We are changing things now, and you know what the result is. Everything is already plain to see, as they say.

What we need most of all now is to avoid getting drawn into a fight, into a fight, into confrontation. We need mutual understanding, and we need to progress toward a solution of these extremely difficult problems facing us.

[Speaker in audience] You are not answering my question. Given the monopolistic situation in our country, how could you free up prices? After all, the reform of 1965 showed that prices go up and the range of goods goes down.

[Gorbachev] At the plenum of the CPSU Central Committee I will answer the written questions which have been submitted. Do you have any objection? I will answer them briefly. [reads the first question] At the Central Committee plenum on 16 March 1988 you said that before raising prices, this question should be the subject of a broad debate and that the Soviet people should be assured that such decisions would not be taken without their involvement. Prices have been increased. Whom did you consult? Whose advice did you take?

Well, I think that I should be blunt and frank—in the style of miners—with you. I think we made a mistake by announcing that we would be consulting people. I shall tell you why now. This does not mean that this should not be done democratically. Who, in general, would think of settling the question that way? But, comrades, no state deals the way we have been dealing with the problem of reforming our prices and proceeding to do so. It is considered an emergency if it becomes known a day before that there is an intention, but in April you and I proclaimed—once we had promised, we kept our word—and for a whole year we have been breaking up our market, tearing the guts out of it, creating such speculative buying, setting up such mafia-like structures, that

now we still have to increase the goods, and it is still necessary for it all to get to the shops and be sold at these prices.

So we did consult. We consulted a great deal. We consulted so much that now we have to get out of this. Finally, we are dealing with all these proposals, after all. Everyone has reported. The cabinet and everyone. All the repubics have taken part. The agreement of the republics has been signed. It has been put to the Supreme Soviet; they are, after all, representatives of all the working people. Therefore, I do not know what else you want. Do you want everyone to consent to the prices and everyone to agree? That will never happen!

So, as a result it has turned out that we are already selling agricultural output at 142 billion rubles, I think, right?

[Unidentified speaker] 152.

[Gorbachev] 152. And the subsidy?

[Unidentified speaker] 228.

[Gorbachev] Well, you understand what kind of prices these are. So, since we sell this output in this way, first this is disrespect for peasants' labor and what is done. Second, this means that prices are being increased completely unjustifiably in some places. Anyway, such a twisted pricing system has been created in our country that it can only work under an administrative system. It does not reflect any economic realities.

Therefore, the main thing is for us to get out of this mess, this pricing system, and we have therefore come to this conclusion. At first, as you remember, Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, in April, when he made a report, said that we will be compensated to the tune of 55 or 60 percent. And the increase will be channelled into compensation.

We saw what a painful issue is was, with what difficulty it was proceeding, and we decided—apart from the delicacies, the luxury goods on which we raised prices last November—to allocate all the remaining proceeds which we will get from the rises for compensation, because the most important thing for us now is not the gain, in the sense of money which we take away, but to normalize our whole system of prices, the arrangement of prices, so that from these new levels of wholesale, producers', and retail prices we can more or less proceed consciously, systematically. We could not proceed normally from what we used to have until now. All these things were upside-down, without reflecting reality. That is why, at least in this respect, we are acting honestly. All the proceeds we get, almost 85 percent of the proceeds from the rises, apart from the reservation I have made, everything is being given back, going toward compensation.

Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich, you rightly noted that there are people who are always there. Indeed there are, but here this is mainly a large body of decent miners. Even those who put the issues so critically here, I simply ask them to keep their independence and not to yield to the political passions that prevail in the country. You cannot let the miners' cause and the miners become a pawn in political battles. That's dangerous for society. That could develop into a confrontation which we might later not get out of. That is why, in connection with this, I say: Ask all the questions you consider necessary but do not forget that there are attempts to exploit you too.

Comrade (Rogozyanov) from Rostovugol thinks the miners' demands do not arise from a good life. The men were ready for compromise, but the criminally long silence on the part of the government brought about the situation today. What is your attitude to the silence?

Well, this has got through to me. I think that here we have some kind of misunderstanding. I cannot accept that we did not react to even the first signs of discontent and demands, the first coal stoppages. Everyone got down to it straight away.

Second, the Kemerovo miners, Comrade (Tuleyev) phoned me and asked me to see deputies from among the miners. I saw them and we talked and examined everything concerning the Kuzbass, and he should have reported. We have not solved everything yet but we will, and we are, all that we, so to speak—so we reacted to this too. [sentence as heard]

The only thing we said was: What was there to talk about with those demanding that the president and the prime minister resign and that the Supreme Soviet be dissolved? Especially as Comrade (Denisenko), at the head of a team, keeps going around and instigating—you sit tight and let's give support, otherwise they will get rid of Yeltsin. Let us go on applying pressure.

All this is known to us. All this is being done in this country. We have all the information in our hands. Therefore, the businesslike talk started in good time. We were ready for it from the beginning, and we had meetings with the miners. It is true that it was mixed up with political passions. If there was some misunderstanding, and if you think that some disrespect toward the miners was shown by our side, I am very sorry. I do not want you to retain such feelings in your hearts.

[Reads question] Will you be able, if only provisionally, to state the time required to stabilize the economy and improve the standard of living of working people? I think if we adopt the program for stabilization and fulfill it with all the republics and all branches of industry, this year we can set in motion the processes of stabilization, and they will get under way in the market, and everywhere. We need this, in the year, too. But, comrades, only on the condition that we do everything. But, how is it done now? We sign an economic agreement. Then, one republic does not comply with it, then another, then one branch of industry, then a third one, and so on. Sovereign princedoms are starting up. If we do it this way, we shall destroy our country. It seems that those who are fighting for the Ukraine, for Russia, for Karaganda, for

the Urals, for Sverdlovsk, for Stavropol—I shall not leave it out—all of them are now presenting themselves as populists, working with such zeal for their lands. In reality, in this country, which has been formed over thousands of years, everything is tied together. As soon as these ties break up, as soon as such obstacles are created to these economic ties on the basis of the war of laws and sovereignties, this is the end, nothing will work. Therefore, the program should be adopted, and everyone should give a blood oath, as they say, that they will act only this way, together. Only together can we pull through.

Here is this question, too. This question is greeting me from Vorkuta. Mikhail Sergeyevich, as general secretary do you yourself believe in building communism? If yes, when do you think this will be possible? In a 100 or 200 years? Please, explain what communism is, avoiding quotations from the party literature.

Yes, comrades, I am in the party because of my conviction. I am a man of conviction who remains loyal to the socialist idea because this is an idea nurtured by the very evolution of humanity. And it means something to people. Yes, what happened to us after the revolution cannot but worry us, and we cannot but learn our lessons from history. But we should learn lessons without trampling our own history—the history of our grandfathers, our fathers, and those who have fallen, and especially we should not trample on the graves of those who fought for this country and for our motherland. Therefore, do not put everything into one heap.

During this difficult, dramatic history, with all its Stalinism and its bloody deeds, the people have done much for this land. They built a powerful country in its great expanse, a country capable of solving such tasks. Yes, we have found ourselves at this historic impasse. Yes, we should get out of this difficult period in our history. But I view the way out of this not by denouncing the socialist idea but through consistently implementing and enriching it. Also, do not let yourselves be fooled again. There are values. Our choice is made within the framework of socialist choice. A just society, economic and political freedom, a democratic society, a law-governed society, a society that chooses human values and the experience of other peoples. These are our values around which...

As for how this can be implemented, this must be done taking into account our country, our experience, our frame of mind, and everything that we have gone through. Attempts again to impose some sort of model and to again coerce people to lead good lives by way of prisons—what sort of socialism is that? Therefore, what I said does not contradict socialism and that means that the choice about the forms of ownership, political pluralism, and dissent do not contradict socialism. Let political parties and political leaders compete and let them demonstrate to the people the appeal of their programs and aims, gain their support, and take over power. Anyway, wherever I go I am always asked difficult questions. And so I answer them.

Mikhail Sergeyevich, you still enjoy enormous authority in the country. This has been falling sharply of late, above all because you are still occupying the posts of general secretary and president. In our country, in this situation, one cannot pray to two gods at once. If you still hold the future of our country dear, resign from the post of general secretary and allocate to the CPSU the place in history it deserves. [applause]

Here is some thin applause! This is how we will put it down in the protocol. [laughter in the audience] I think I have expressed my view about this frankly at every venue. I believe that this is not a once and for all situation. Moreover, I wish to say this bluntly: It is very difficult to combine these two posts, very difficult physically. No, let me say this: Why have I not raised the question for my part that this question be solved in this way. First, I believe that it would not be tactful of me to formulate this question in this way. Communists should decide this for themselves. This was discussed at the congress, as you remember. I was asked for my opinion. And I expressed it. I still hold it, namely, that in the present situation, when a profound process is under way in our country in the framework of political reform, when the legislative and executive power are being shaped, when political pluralism is taking shape and the delimitation of functions between the party and the state, and so on, is developing, I think that combining these two posts is useful. After all, there could have arisen a confrontation between state institutions and the party which simply no force could have restrained.

Incidentally—let us be frank—it does arise. At every plenum I am very seriously criticized on many issues, as you will have noticed. Nevertheless, the majority at the present time at plenums of the Central Committee express themselves in favor of a combination of the posts. But I think that we are undoubtedly moving toward a position where the posts must be divided up. The time will come for this.

Moreover, let us not make a tragedy of this. All the leaders of a winning party in elections head the state and remain leaders of the party. As a rule they are chairmen of the party. There are national secretaries who carry out specific work in the party, but the leader remains and heads the state. It is another matter that a president by virtue of his position must have normal relations with all sections of the working people and the people and consequently with all political movements of every persuasion. He should not be hampered by his membership, in this case, in the Communist Party. He should not be hampered from having meetings with the representatives of any political movement or sections and discussing matters relating to the development of society and the state. I consider that this should be understood by everyone, including the communists. I spoke of this in Belorussia. Communists do not always understand this.

But with regard to its historical place—placing the CPSU in its historical place—I think that the processes of perestroyka have in effect already placed the CPSU in an equal position with all the political movements. It is another matter that this party at the present time can to a considerable degree be said to be the ruling party, although there are already in this respect forces of a different persuasion, so to speak, which are in office. That is to say that there is no longer any complete and total monopoly as existed in the past. Processes are under way and they will decide how things will be in the future.

Comrades ask: How can prices be free with monopolism or supermonopolism? Indeed, unless we regulate this issue, there will be a monopoly on prices, diktat, imposition of supermonopoly prices, and instead of getting into technology and scientific and technical progress, they will be squeezing proceeds and profits through price increases in connection with the fact that there is no competition. But that is why anti-monopoly legislation is being created. I think it is even already being examined by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Should I go on answering? I have more questions here. Perhaps I should leaf through quickly. They say the most [word indistinct]. Is that enough? Fine. Fine.

Comrades say you were once an initiator of setting up a commission on privileges. It was headed by Primakov. Where is this commission? Where are its results?

The commissions are there. They exist both at the USSR Supreme Soviet and at the Russian Supreme Soviet. But I should say that the reminders that these commissions should report to the supreme soviets are timely, I think, because the things that were alleged and said about the privileges of the party apparatus do not at all compare with the present privileges. I think these are incomparable things. And I am going to leave this.

What is the president doing for the speediest signing of the Union treaty? It is the basis of our future life.

I think that is something I am dealing with and thoroughly. There have been a great many references to the people. Every point of view on what the Union should be like was unfailingly argued through a reference to the views of the people. This led me to conclude that this question should indeed be put to the people. You may recall how many people did not want this question to be put up for discussion. The question has been resolved. Despite the fact that the formulation was complicated—I did not formulate it, mine was easier—nevertheless, the Supreme Soviet went on so long formulating it that it appeared in this form—Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a renewed federation of sovereign republics, where rights are reliably guaranteed. I think reality forced the people to put forward this complicated formulation for discussion, and, nevertheless, everyone came to understand what it was about. In spite of all the counter-agitation, 80 percent came along and took part in the voting and 76 percent supported the Union.

This is something tremendous. All those who wanted to break up the Union or turn it into something amorphous, something amoebic, will find things more difficult now.

I think this has opened opportunities for work on completing the draft Union treaty, to be basically complete in April, and to arrive at its signing in May. Everything is proceeding toward this. There are steps designed to achieve this. As far as I am concerned, I will do whatever I can to make this happen.

Well, there are many specific questions here about contracts between mines, etc. I think I will pick them out, and we will hand them over—this is all about how things need to be organized.

The question is being asked: Mikhail Sergeyevich, is your salary subject to progressive taxation? But of course, comrades! My wages have been fixed at 4,000—1,670 tax. Yes, yes, yes! This is so. That is what I can tell you.

So by adding the contributions to the trade unions, it can be said that the president's salary is 2,000. That is to say, not the salary, but what he takes home.

How much do I earn on the side? [chuckles] Comrades, today all income earned on the side and the privileges enjoyed by the president have been laid down by the Supreme Soviet. I myself tried to achieve that. It is necessary that in our country everything is decided, well, in a decent fashion, as in a normal state.

Well, Comrade Boldyrev from Donetsk, continues the resignation theme, tries to persaude me to display historic initiative and at the same time, resign.

It is perfectly possible and even more than probable that your successor will be worse than you. However, in the consciousness of the population he will not be responsible for the crisis situation that has arisen. And that is why he will enjoy greater support among the people. This will make it possible to bring into play that very human factor which previously you frequently spoke of. This is like a marriage without love, love cannot be compelled. Boldyrev, Donetsk.

Well, Comrade Boldyrev, let me say again to you sincerely, in a party way and in a human way, that first, the question remains an open one. The Constitution exists and there exist laws and all the mechanisms for replacing the president. Thus this is at the disposal of society. Well, does this mean I would cling to power by the teeth and am ready to die to keep it? Well, no, comrades. I regard myself as responsible for everything that began in 1985. I have no though at this difficult time, when after moving from the stage of philosophical discussion to the elaboration of policy we have come close to real changes in our lives, of now becoming afraid of the difficulties and saying 'Help! I am leaving'.

No, but if there will be precisely such a decision by the Congress of People's Deputies, then there would be no question, no question at all. This should be normal.

[Unidentified questioner] More than one comrade has asked this question more than once. So, all the conversations on the economy and all these difficulties, all this is a long-term question. But let us say that the main thing with which perestroyka began is glasnost. It is not a long-term question. And, therefore, a simple question. How do you assess the work of our television which is represented in the singular and by a single company and its leader Kravchenko?

[Gorbachev] And how do you assess the five or 10 newspapers that expound only the point of view and subjects of a platform and nothing else? How do you assess them? [applause]

[Questioner] So...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] If we are rounding up, then I must say literally a few words in conclusion. This has been a very difficult time that we have lived through—you and I and the whole country. I hope that what has taken place over these two days here in the Kremlin as a result of all the discussions and the elucidation of both political and economic issues, I hope and think that this has not divided us.

In any case, I want to assure you that the miners' understanding is very important for us. An understanding that we do not imagine a different stance, which would be, well, a sort of disdainful one to them, to this detachment of workers, of the working class. This is unacceptable to us.

If there are some matters that we cannot resolve now, then you must also understand this. Because there are many problems in the country. Possibilities are limited. The country finds itself in this state. So, I hope that everything that can be squeezed out, given the current opportunities, and the finding of solutions...[changes thought] And there, in essence, the thing has been set in such a way that you also have to do a lot—I am fully aware of how these approaches have been formed. Here it is not merely a question of living the miners a hand-out, or whatever. No, I realize that it is a question of the miners also assuming both the onus of responsibility and the obligation to do more and to yield more for the country. Therefore, I consider that however acute and difficult this discussion has been, it is useful and necessary. The main thing is this: Let us try to do what we have agreed on, both at the government level and on your part. And, taking advantage of the fact that you are here, I appeal to all the country's miners through you. Let us, comrades, now deal with practical matters.

Everything depends on this. If we, if anybody draws, succeeds in drawing us into political battles, into an obsession with meetings, into a continuation of all this, then, I tell you, difficult things, extremely difficult trials and tribulations, await us. This must be understood. We are all in the same boat. We are all dependent upon each other. Therefore, let us all row in this direction, all of us together. Therefore, I wish you endurance and success and I hope once again that we can achieve mutual understanding. All the best, and greetings to all your comrades. [applause]

Shatalin Terms Pavlov Price Measures 'Nonsense'

LD0404204491 Moscow TASS in English 2022 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—"All steps taken by the Pavlov government, including the administrative raising of retail prices, are economic nonsense," academician Stanislav Shatalin, former member of the Presidential Council and one of the authors of the 500 days programme, said in an interview with VECHERNYAYA MOSKVA.

"The growth of prices will neither bring us additional goods, nor help us stabilise the market. Moreover, this kind of the reform of retail prices will force the government to raise them again in two to three months. Prices can be changed only on the basis of a real transition to market relations, together with the changing of the property relationship, the introduction of free enterprise, naturally, together with the introduction of the private property institution, the creation of the capital market and a tough credit and financing policy. Without all these measures the raising of prices is nothing but a fiscal, static and robbery-like measure, which will not promote in any way the growth of the production of goods and services, will lead to super-inflation and to another round of price raising. This will be an endless process," Academician Shatalin said.

He believes that the Pavlov cabinet is absolutely incapable of getting the country out of the extremely grave economic crisis. In his opinion, "now it is necessary to return to a tougher version of the 500 days programme and take into consideration all the new, valuable, useful and clever ideas expressed during the past six months."

"The non-approval of the programme was the most serious mistake during the past five years. Inactivity during the subsequent several months led to a further disintegration of the national economy, to political instability and new outbreaks of inter-ethnic strife. A chance, perhaps the only one, to rally the republics and achieve real consolidation of our society has been lost," he said.

Academician Shatalin believes that "we need an entirely new government, formed on different principles: it should be multinational, should include representatives of various sections of the population and of various parties. We have people with a high moral and intellectual prestige, who could become members of this government."

Shatalin said that he does not believe in any civil wars or military coups in the country. "I think we all shall have

enough common sense for passing over to economic and political businesslike partnership," he pointed out.

Price Committee Aide on Prices, Commodities

PM0504141391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Second Edition p 2

["Topical Interview" with A. Komin, first deputy chairman of the USSR State Prices Committee, by correspondent Ye. Sorokin; place and date not given: "Prices Leap—No Goods"]

[Text] New prices have been in effect in the country since 2 April. All the same, unfortunately, there are no goods in the stores. However, deep within the soul of every one of us there lies the hope that we will still be able to get hold of something. But at what prices will we acquire it?

A. Komin, first deputy chairman of the USSR State Prices Committee, answers this question from PRAVDA's correspondent:

"In the main, all the republics have adopted the price ceilings named in the presidential decree and in the USSR Cabinet of Ministers resolution. Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan have fulfilled in full the agreement on price reform which they signed.

"In a number of republics, however, discrepancies with the ceilings for list prices have been observed. Thus, in Uzbekistan the prices of bread, flour, and pasta products have not been increased, but the republic's inhabitants are paying far more for meat. Mutton, for example, costs 10 rubles [R] per kg, although its price is R6.50. Beef in Georgia costs R12, and the price of vodka has been increased 80 percent in the hope that, as there are said to be a lot of tourists in the republic—let them pay for the 'pleasure.'

"As is known, the Baltic republics increased prices even earlier and did not sign the interrepublic agreement. The prices of meat, dairy, and fish products and vodka there are even now 15-30 percent higher than as defined in the Cabinet of Ministers resolution. Thus, sugar in Lithuania costs R3. And it is planned to set fabric prices depending on the actual costs, which, according to forecasts, will be considerably higher than the average for the Union.

"Many questions are being asked with regard to compensation. As is known, of the total increase in prices to the tune of R310 billion, R260 billion will be distributed as compensation, i.e. an average of R74.50 per person per month. People ask: Why, then, have they given only R60? The thing is that, first, the compensation for pensioners totaled R65 and, second, it was necessary to increase the wages of teachers, physicians, and working people in the cultural sphere.

"Two republics—Russia and Belorussia—have abolished the ceilings on average per capita wages, under which compensation is fixed for children. The USSR Government supported this step.

"I will stipulate especially that the presidential decree and the Cabinet of Ministers resolution do not extend to prices in consumer cooperative stores."

So, Komin unequivocally pointed to the illegality of introducing higher price ceilings in state stores. Nevertheless, reports continue to be received that price discrepancies are to be observed everywhere. **We wish to warn the reader: This is a violation.** As for the commercial prices of cigarettes in Moscow, Komin gave an assurance that the State Prices Committee will seek their repeal. The only question is: Will our uncontrollable Moscow City Soviet make concessions?

Reports of working people's protests at the sharp increase in the cost of public-catering dinners and school catering are coming from the provinces. There have even been warning strikes in a number of places. The editorial office has learned that the USSR Cabinet of Ministers made a very careful examination of this problem 3 April. Based on the suggestions of the USSR Ministry of Trade, a government commission has been set up which is to elaborate within four days measures aimed at relieving the public-catering pressure on working people's pockets. And yet public catering itself has ended up in a very complex position and needs concrete assistance from ministries and departments.

As for the lack of goods, we will await new receipts. And whether there are any depends, you will agree, on your work and mine.

Gorbachev Replies to Army Conference Queries

PM0404194591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 5 Apr 91 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "M.S. Gorbachev's Answers to Questions and Requests by Participants of the 30 March 1991 First All-Army Party Conference"]

[Text] There were many questions and requests, M.S. Gorbachev said, so, as far as time allows, I will give some brief answers.

Comrade Valeriy Pavlovich Domashevskiy, submarine flotilla party committee secretary in the Pacific Ocean Fleet: "The communists in our formation have faith in you and support you. We expect to see more resolute and concrete actions in all spheres of our life. Respectfully yours, on behalf of the Pacific Ocean Fleet Communists."

M.S. Gorbachev: Well, I will take note of that.

Comrade Yuriy Mikhaylovich Prokofyev, deputy chief of the military-political department of the Transcaucasus Military District construction directorate: "Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich! The pseudodemocrats are going on the offensive, essentially using fascist forms and methods of struggle for power. You are displaying real Leninist patience in the quest for nationwide accord, but they favor force. What does the future hold?"

M.S. Gorbachev: I think we must stick to the course of democratic transformations, so we need to reinforce state power within the framework of the Constitution and the laws and make it more effective and more resolute.

Comrade Vladimir Mikhaylovich Zakharenkov, secretary of an Air Force formation party committee: "Do you and the members of the Politburo think it is necessary and possible for the secretary of the All-Army Party Committee, who expresses the will of one of the country's largest detachments of communists, to be made a member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo?"

M.S. Gorbachev: I believe there have been other questions on this subject. I believe that there is every justification for the presence of the secretary of the All-Army Party Committee in the CPSU Central Commitee Politburo or Secretariat. (Applause)

Comrade Nikolay Nikolayevich Gerasimov, deputy chief of a brigade military-political department, Kiev Military District: "Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich, my question is on behalf of the unit's officers and men: Are we not too preoccupied with current business; what is the party's ultimate goal? Communism? Do you personally believe in it? Please tell us."

M.S. Gorbachev: I have spoken about this on several occasions, comrades; indeed, I talked about it here. I remain a communist, on the basis of a profound belief which I am not likely to change after 60 years. I am dedicated to the socialist idea and I believe that it is a fruitful one. As life shows, there are many different ways of implementing this idea. What you and I are doing, I believe, follows the right lines. I have no doubts about this, because I associate the implementation of the socialist idea with the attainment of these goals that the people have been alive to for centuries. They are social justice, democracy, freedom, and reliable, normal human relations and human solidarity.

I do not want to go into any more detail at this time, particularly as the other day the working group sent out the draft new CPSU Program to the members of the preparatory commission. And as soon as we are ready we will submit it to the intercongress conference provided for in our Statutes. This is very important for us Communists and, I believe, for the whole of society. It will provide the answers to many questions. So I will confine myself to that observation.

Comrade Yevgeniy Ivanovich Anikin, secretary of a USSR Defense Ministry directorate party committee: "Many people accuse you of indecision, and I say that you show steely composure. Please touch on this question, if you can."

M.S. Gorbachev: If by decisiveness you mean a return to the old methods, to suppression and coercion, I will tell you straight that I will not do that.

If it is a question of protecting citizens' rights within the framework of the Constitution, protecting the interests of the state and democratic transformations, using constitutional powers, I believe that the president of any state can and is entitled to act in these conditions. I include myself in this.

I very much want to ensure that in our country, which we all love—and I am sure that there are people here who would give their all for this land and for the people—to ensure that we never have a repetition of the division into "Reds" and "Whites and the confrontation that led to millions of deaths. The times of 1937-1938, 1952 and 1953, and so on must not be allowed to return under the slogan of protecting socialism or any other slogan.

I am sure that we will solve all the problems by following the path of democratic transformations.

I advocate pluralism of opinions, political pluralism, and I am in favor of every party's winning authority by demonstrating that its programmatic goals are attractive. But I am categorically against ideological and political confrontation and programmatic competition developing into the fueling of political passions by any means available, the provoking of mass disturbances, confrontation, a split in society, and civil war. I am convinced that the people are aware of this and adpot a sensible apporoach. Incidentally, comrades, our citizens, when they propose decisive action, are not advocating repression but are advocating the rule of law and firm order. You will say that there are also people of a certain "brown" or "semibrown" hue who are thirsting for

power. Indeed there are. But I am sure we will not allow them to gain power. (Applause)

'Businesslike' Debate Opens Army Conference

PM0404122191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 30 Mar 91 Second Edition pp 1, 2

[Report by A. Gorokhov and V. Izgarshev: "Responsibility for the Fatherland"]

[Text] Yesterday saw the opening at the Soviet Army Central Academy Theater of the First All-Army Party Conference, which marks the final stage in creating a unified party organization for the USSR Armed Forces as an integral part of the CPSU.

M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the USSR, took part in the conference's work. The agenda includes the following item: "On the current moment and measures for the ideological unity and organizational-political strengthening of the USSR Armed Forces' party organizations." Delegates have to confirm "The Statute on the USSR Armed Forces' CPSU Organization Control Commission." First the military communists' new party organs—the All-Army Party Committee and the USSR Armed Forces' CPSU Organization Control Commission—will be elected.

Yesterday delegates discussed a report on the first item, which was delivered by Colonel General N. Shlyaga, chief of the USSR Armed Forces Main Military-Political Directorate and USSR first deputy minister of defense.

The Army and Navy communists' party organization, it was stressed at the conference, operates on the basis of the USSR Constitution and other Union laws. It is governed by the CPSU Program and Statutes and the decisions of supreme leading organs. Expressing the will of more than 1 million military communists, delegates spoke about the personnel's devotion to their constitutional duty, their people, the socialist choice, and the course of all-around renewal of Soviet society.

With a sense of awareness of their personal responsibility to the fatherland, Army and Navy communists advocate with conviction the further deepening of perestroyka and the strengthening of the unity of the Union of republics.

Everything happening in the country deeply worries the military. Communists in uniform consider it essential that more resolute measures be taken to support constitutional order in the country and oppose all antipeople and antisocialist actions by nationalists, separatists, or other forces which attempt to disrupt society and the state structure and cause uncertainty, destruction, and chaos in politics, the economy, and the whole of our life.

Speeches resolutely rebutted the attacks made on the Army and attempts to diminish and depreciate its role in society—our Army has always been and will remain the child of the people. The Soviet military organization's strength and invincibility lies in its bond with the people and its service to them. It must remain united and not be compartmentalized on national lines.

Communists specially stressed their personal care and concern to strengthen the country's defense capability at the level of defense sufficiency and to unite the personnel and galvanize them to discharge their citizen's duty to defend the state in a conscious and skillful way.

Delegates discussed with great commitment the party organizations' activity as military reform is implemented and the USSR Armed Forces are reduced. Every communist must set an example and serve as a model to those who are not party members. He is a political fighter for the party and his life-stance and action must match up to the requirements of the time. Is everything here ideal? Far from it. But every deviation from the standards of party life, even a small slip, let alone an actual misdemeanor, by a communist tarnishes the whole of our party. To forget this is to undermine its authority among the masses.

Today political steadfastness and ideological maturity are more valuable than ever before. Without these qualities there is and can be no genuine leader of the masses. Delegates stressed that one of the most important aspects of party work should be to form in communists and all personnel a knowledge of the law, to ensure their compliance with the demands of Soviet laws and the military oath and regulations, and to create a healthy moral atmosphere in military collectives and enhance their responsibility for people's life and health.

A comprehensive program for the social development of the Armed Forces to the year 2000 has now been elaborated. It is designed to improve the social protection and the living and everyday conditions of servicemen and members of their familiies.

The discussion is businesslike and informed by a sense of principle and responsibility. The conference continues its work today.

Air Defense Forces Party Conference Held

PM0404141991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Mar 91 First Edition p 1

[Colonel A. Yurkin report: "Closing Party Ranks"]

[Text] The Air Defense Forces party conference reminded me of bitter winter days on the training ground. On these days, assembling in the combat deployment center, getting down to work straight from the march, divisions, battalions, companies, and batteries would take up positions and in a short space of time get themselves into a state of combat readiness.

True, it was different kinds of reports and briefings that were heard in the conference hall, but they had that same martial ring. Communists were discussing their operations program.

And the tone of the wide-ranging, principled discussion was set by the main speaker—Colonel General N. Boyko, chief of the Air Defense Forces Military-Political Directorate.

It was emphasized that a critical interpretation of life does not prevent people from seeing the positive tendencies too in the work of communists. For example, there has never been an occasion in the Air Defense Forces when the party organization has shrunk. The slogan put forward by anticommunists and double-dealers—"Don't leave the party—damage it from within"—has also met with no response among the troops. In the perestroyka period people have learned to identify who is who. It is no coincidence that the speakers condemned the provocative appeals of B.N. Yeltsin.

All the speakers unanimously supported the stance of the USSR president and came out in favor of the signing of a Union treaty.

The approach to problems at the conference was constructive and critical. The delegates were exacting in their assessment of miscalculations in the work of the party organizations of a number of units, and of those who have begun to interpret party democracy as irresponsibility and unaccountability. Colonel G. Sokhanenko and other delegates spoke about this in particular.

The idea of the great responsibility of communists for the fate of the fatherland was a common theme. Like other conference delegates, I was stirred by the speech by Army General Ivan Moiseyevich Tretyak, commander in chief of the Air Defense Forces. The front-line communist stressed that military reform, high-quality performance of combat duty, and the assimilation of the latest models of weapons were impossible without the active help of the party organizations. Commanders, military-political organs, and party committees of all levels must work together in close contact in the search for the best decisions.

Yu. Prokofyev, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of Moscow City CPSU Committee, took part in and addressed the conference.

...Those harsh days of the training ground, frozen under the snow, have left me with a memory of the magnificent combat work of radar operators, missilemen, and airmen. In difficult times we could pool our wills for a common purpose and stand our ground. It was with this feeling that delegates traveled back to their garrisons.

Baltic Republics

Further Reportage on Lithuanian-Soviet Talks

Vilnius Reports 'Vigorous Debate'

LD0404143891 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1350 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By ELTA special correspondent Balys Burelis in Moscow]

[Text] The meeting between the Lithuanian Republic state delegation for interstate negotiations and the delegation of the Soviet Union, which is currently taking place in the Kremlin, was adjourned for a short break after two hours.

At the beginning of the sitting, the points of view of the negotiating parties concerning the objectives and the principles of the negotiations were presented by Ceslovas Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the Rpublic of Lithuania, and Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, head of the Soviet delegation. According to the available information, vigorous debate is under way. The meeting continues.

Soviet Side Reports 'Headway'

LD0404172791 Moscow TASS in English 1714 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Moscow April 4 TASS—Official Soviet and Lithuanian delegations for bilateral talks held a working meeting in Moscow today. Federal Deputy Prime Minister Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, who leads the Kremlin delegation, later said: "We made headway in our dialogue."

He told a news conference here that the meeting was not always smooth and agreement evaded the delegations on some points, but they still were able to solve several contentious issues.

In particular, they agreed to begin talks without any preconditions or mutual recriminations.

Doguzhiyev said the next meeting is to deal with the ownership of state enterprises in Lithuania that are run by federal ministries, with financial, economic and commercial relations between the USSR and the Baltic republic, and with the Lithuanian border regime.

"We did not come to accord on all issues, but the meeting made progress" towards this end, according to Lithuanian Vice-President Ceslovas Stankiavicius, who leads the delegation from his republic.

"It is clear that both sides sought to bring their positions closer together," he added.

Sides Issue Joint Communique

LD0404224691 Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2100 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] A meeting of the delegations of the Soviet Union and the Republic of Lithuania took place today in the Kremlin. In accordance with an agreement by both sides, it was not regarded as the beginning of negotiations.

A joint communique was published after the meeting. Its text is as follows: "A working meeting of the Soviet Union's delegation led by Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, first deputy prime minister of the Soviet Union, and the Lithuanian delegation led at this meeting by Ceslovas Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, took place on 4 April in the Kremlin. The aims of the negotiations and some important principles and organizational and procedural issues of the delegations' work were coordinated. It was decided what problems will be discussed at the next meeting, which is to be held at the end of April or the beginning of May of this year."

The Vilnius radio correspondent was told by head of the Lithuanian delegation, Ceslovas Stankevicius, that the Soviet delegation clearly stated it did not have authorization to conduct interstate negotiations. According to the deputy chairman of the Lithuanian legislature, a new political decision by the Soviet Union assessing the realities was essential for it to start negotiations. According to him, the Soviet Union was raising conditions that are totally unacceptable to Lithuania: to acknowledge the Soviet Union's Constitution, introduce a moratorium, and so on.

The talk was long and difficult, noted Ceslovas Stankevicius. The Lithuanian delegation stayed in the Kremlin from 1100 until roughly 1900.

Vilnius radio was told by Minister Without Portfolio Aleksandras Abisala that primarily issues concerning the activities of the Army were discussed. According to Ceslovas Stankevicius, on the very important issues—the principles of the negotiations, equality, the use of force, and the buildings seized in Vilnius—the Lithuanian delegation failed to obtain satisfactory answers. The Soviet side stated that it did not have authorization to solve these issues.

Stankevicius Views Talks

LD0504091791 Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2100 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Remarks by Ceslovas Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, head of the Lithuanian delegation on bilateral talks with the USSR, during an interview with journalists in Moscow on 4 April; hosted by Edvinas Butkus—recorded]

[Text] [Butkus] The Lithuanian delegation returned at 2000 from the Kremlin to the permanent mission in Moscow. There was a brief interview with Ceslovas

Stankevicius, the head of the Lithuanian negotiators, by journalists. Roma Pakeniene, Vilnius radio correspondent, recorded the interview and sent it to Vilnius radio by telephone.

[Stankevicius] The atmosphere of the negotiations was difficult in that the other side was not prepared for a more constructive dialogue. We had, in many respects, an opportunity to become convinced that the Soviet Union was adhering to the old political position which hampers and limits. Besides, the delegation clearly stated that it did not have necessary authorization to conduct bilateral negotiations.

We defined as a possible aim of the negotiations the regulation of relations between the Republic of Lithuania and the Soviet Union. This definition has prospects if a real content is introduced. I wish to say, however, that on very important issues—the principles of the negotiations—we did not succeed in receiving a satisfactory answer.

As for the most important matter—on the refusal to use force and the threats of using force—we applied all efforts to convince the Soviet side that it was a naturally obvious and essential principle which should be adhered to during the negotiations and in later relations, in order for us to regard them as normal, friendly, and neighborly. The Soviet side was not prepared today to supply such a confirmation of its stand.

The question remains open about the present situation in Vilnius, on the use of force and the seized objects. We wanted to have today an answer concerning Lithuanian television and some other issues, and we only received an answer that the delegation could not resolve this issue and make a decision today. The Soviet Union needs a new political solution to begin negotiations—that is, the Soviet Union must make a decision assessing the political and legal reality of the Republic of Lithuania in the present European context. There is no such solution so far and the delegation, it seems, did not have either authorizations or instructions to adopt such a stand today.

[Butkus] Ceslovas Stankevicius noted that the Soviet Union's negotiators agreed that the previous agreements between the sides were valid. The succession, however, is formal—they talk about the procedural or regulating problems only. The Soviet Union moreover, was raising at today's meeting unexpected demands.

[Stankevicius] The Soviet Union was putting forward some completely unacceptable demands, like a demand to adhere to and acknowledge the Soviet Union's Constitution, the validity of Soviet laws, a demand to introduce moratoriums, and some other unacceptable things. A difficult impression remained after the talk, but I see that the Soviet Union's delegation itself was regarding its stance as unprepared for the negotiations.

This is their own assessment, but yesterday Vice Premier Doguzhiyev stated that they were regarding negotiations as possible. It is difficult to imagine this process, but I wish to stress one important matter. A new political regulation [nuostata] is essential. The Soviet Union has not yet taken up a position which is essential for constructive negotiations, that is, negotiations between two states which must end in a political treaty and the recognition of the Republic of Lithuania.

There was talk during the negotiations about the things necessary to conduct bilateral negotiations. They understand that a juridical recognition of Lithuania by the Soviet Union is essential. They were not, however, ready to begin this process today.

We are formulating the aim as the restoration of bilateral relations between the Republic of Lithuania and the Soviet Union; the renewal of the recognition of the independence of Lithuania, bearing in mind, among other things, the principles of the treaty of 12 July 1920, the 11 March act, and the 9 February referendum. These are facts which they are taking into account but which they do not wish to recognize. They do not wish to draw conclusions arising from these facts.

[Butkus] Ceslovas Stankevicius responded to the question by the Vilnius radio correspondent on whether another meeting would take place if the aim of the negotiations is not [to] be formulated:

[Stankevicius] We discussed whether it was worth conducting negotiations without any purpose. To examine a set of problems without expecting to achieve any aim and to sign an agreement would be futile. We stated this. I do not know, time will show whether the Soviet Union will understand the necessity of such an attitude, whether it will understand that this is the only constructive approach.

[Butkus] Ceslovas Stankevicius noted that the Soviet Union, by stating that it would not be necessary to put forward any conditions, was putting forward conditions today. He also noted that the work started previously by the joint working groups and the experts would continue.

[Stankevicius] The groups of experts will have to prepare materials, solutions or, at least, material for the delegations to discuss and seek solutions. This is the question of procedural nature. Problems to be dealt with by the working groups have been defined in very general terms and I wish to repeat once again that it is very important what content is supplied to these formulas.

The Soviet Union likes very much to apply interpretations which are not generally accepted to each expression, each term, each definition. This is unfortunate. The USSR delegation, I would say, is mostly orientated toward pressure, various psychological and other pressure. There was talk about the problems of the Army, but it was not a businesslike talk in the sense that we did not get any constructive reply about the present actions of the Army in Lithuania. It was only agreed that at the next meeting the delegations will discuss this problem.

[Butkus] As the Vilnius radio correspondent was told by Aleksandras Abisala, another delegation member, minister without portfolio, the problem of the Army was the most important at the meeting. Ceslovas Stankevicius meanwhile, mentioned to the journalists other basic aims of the meeting.

[Stankevicius] We regarded the return of the seized buildings, the violation of human rights, as the most important. We said that even on the eve of this meeting a young citizen of the Republic of Lithuania was injured, that this was continuing, that this was systematic, that this was very important. Of course, we received only formal replies, which demonstrate efforts to dissociate from this problem and interpret it as being unreal, as if we have heard it more than once.

We also heard discussion on the recent events, the events of January, that, apparently, they did not take place, that somebody was attacking units of the Soviet Armed Forces. They denied that tanks were crushing people. This was General Moyseyev, this explanation has not changed, and it is very regretable. We did not receive any guarantees on nonuse of force. We can only express great regret and concern. This is concern of all of Lithuania, we said.

The question arises that if there are no attempts by the Soviet Union to pledge not to do this, preparations may be underway to continue to do this. They were always stressing that the Soviet Government was doing nothing to continue this, but I must note that it was doing nothing to prevent this happening in Lithuania. We wanted to hear any guarantee, any confirmation that these efforts would be made.

'Large-Scale' Military Movements in Lithuania

LD0404140291

[Editorial Report] Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Russian at 1100 GMT on 4 April broadcasts a three-minute interview with Audrius Azubalis, Lithuanian Supreme Council press representative, by an unidentified correspondent. The place and date of the interview are not specified. Speaking about yesterday's meeting of work groups in the Kremlin, Azubalis says that the main goal of the groups had been achieved. He went on to say that when Vytautas Landsbergis received the report on the results of the work of the groups, he phoned Vitaliy Doguzhiev, head of the Soviet delegation, and expressed his delight with those results.

Azubalis says: "Yet at the same time Chairman Landsbergis explained that because of varius circumstances, he would not be able to come and participate in the meeting of the delegations. One of the main circumstances impeding this is that already from the beginning of the Easter season, a large-scale movement of military units had once again started in the Republic of Lithuania."

Azubalis goes on to say that "what is most intersting is that once again the old story is being repeated: neither our legislature nor the government is informed about it, either by local or by higher-ranking military authorities. According to our information, a division of USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs troops commanded by General Zhytnikov was relocated to Snieckus, and here a military unit about which we know nothing is to be located, in its place."

The correspondent then asks if the issue of the occupied buildings would be discussed. Azubalis says that the Lithuanian delegation stance is that the beginning of negotiations is also the beginning of discussion of that issue.

Azubalis continues: "What is important is that a good will gesture was given on our part. Some perhaps find it rather beneficial to attempt to torpedo our search for better contacts with the military. Let us put it this way: On the one hand, we can see hopeful signs in Moscow from the leaders of the Soviet Union, and yet on the other hand somebody is stirring things up on purpose. This is probably aimed not only at spoiling relations between Lithuania and the military located here, but also at spoiling the relations that are presently developing in Moscow—I have in mind after the arrival of our negotiation delegations."

RSFSR

Further on 4 Apr Congress of People's Deputies

Moscow TV Carries Session

LD0404225191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1902 GMT on 4 April begins carrying its scheduled program of recorded highlights from the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, Congress of People's Deputies proceedings in the Kremlin on 4 April.

At the start of proceedings, chaired by RSFSR President Yeltsin, Deputy Rasskazov notes the link between the depoliticization issue and economic matters.

Deputy Potapov mentions the sales tax and wants the market plan to be published in the press. Yeltsin says the program will be published. He puts the draft decision on the political and socio-economic situation as a whole to the vote and it is passed.

Yeltsin rises to make a statement on the deteriorating situation in Russia and proposals for redistribution of powers. Deputy Goryacheva goes to the rostrum to complain that Yeltsin is hell-bent on the presidency.

Yeltsin asks for a vote on whether to debate his statement for 30 minutes. The motion is passed.

Deputy Kiselev from Kemerovo says we can't permit another dictatorship to take over the reins of power, and

backs giving special powers to Yeltsin. Deputy Nozdrachenko asks Yeltsin to do something about the miners' plight.

Yeltsin says a draft decision is being distributed. He says the Council of Ministers was also involved in the proposed redistribution of powers. Deputy Lizichenko says that the Yeltsin's proposals should be adopted without delay. A shortage of conscience is preventing a decision on the presidency being made. A decision now will prevent chaos and collapse. He appeals to Yeltsin to ask the miners to stop the strikes, but they will only do so if decisions are made now. Deputy Slavutkin says any change to the constitution should have two-thirds of the vote.

Deputy Tarasov says that Yeltsin's trouble is that his deputy chairmen have betrayed him, and he backs Yeltsin's proposals. Deputy Kaluzhnyy also expresses support for Yeltsin.

Deputy Kobdev from Tomsk says Isayev should resign. The discussion should continue in deputies' groups.

A deputy who is president of the Union of Russian Towns says that if we don't back Yeltsin we shall delay important decisions by several months. Deputy Tshcheslavinskiy says he can't understand the actions of the deputy chairmen. Deputy Vasilyev of the Rabochiy Soyuz says the group has adopted an appeal on the economic crisis, and he reads it out. The group wants wider powers for Yeltsin. Speaking for people in Novosibirsk, Deputy Vinogradova says that Yeltsin should be supported. Deputy Vorkukhin says he can't understand what the Communists of Russia group is worried about, and proposes a vote on the proposals.

At 1948 GMT, there is a scuffle at microphone four. Yeltsin announces a break until midday. Deputies are to consult in groups in the meantime.

Yeltsin opens the next session by proposing a further break so each group can prepare a statement. The proposal is adopted.

At 1953 GMT, the afternoon session opens with Yeltsin reading out additions to the draft resolution on special powers. Yeltsin says the group coordinators should be given the floor, after which a vote should be taken.

The deputies raise related points and Yeltsin tries to put the agenda to a vote. Various deputies raise procedural objections and Yeltsin tries to put a procedural question to a vote. The procedural wrangling continues with various deputies raising points.

Yeltsin asks Silayev to speak. Silayev says he foresees difficulties in the work of the congress. There are essential laws to be passed. It could happen that certain laws might fail to be passed. Deadlock could ensue. In that case, temporary powers must be given to Yeltsin. He explains the first paragraph of the first point of the bill under discussion and suggests new wording.

Isayev says proceedings are being paralyzed by the chairman's behavior. He is out to strengthen his "personal dictatorship." Real and constitutional anti-crisis measures are needed. No cult of the personality! Don't push Russia into chaos.

An unidentified deputy reads a letter from constituents indignant at discord and inefficiency as spring sowing begins. Where is your conscience? Anarchy in crisis could bring collapse.

Yeltsin stops a deputy from speaking because he has not been given the floor. A vote is taken on the question of stopping discussion and it passes.

Shurikov of the Workers' Alliance says he fears chaos if the strikes continue. He says there will be a presidency, it's only a matter of time. The legislature should be enlarged and professionalized, he says, and the powers of the Council of Ministers should be discussed. The fate of autonomous regions causes anxiety, he says.

Deputy Baburin speaks for Russian agrarians, saying the Russia group is for facing problems calmly. The government is in crisis and the "moment of truth" has come for the 10th time. Yeltsin's political declaration came as no surprise. He says the draft has many defects and many merits, it is anti-constitutional, and no one has the right to smash legislation by decree. The draft violates sovereignty, he says, because the RSFSR would no longer be part of the Union—democracy must be respected.

Deputy Stepanov says that the Soviet of the Federation should be convened urgently and Pavlov invited to it. Stepanov speaks for the groups from the republics and autonomous regions and states their point of view. The Constitution lays down the powers of government. Congress has emergency powers on food and other matters. Every clause must be well considered. He insists on going on, though his time is up. Khasbulatov reproaches him for speaking eight minutes, repetitively.

Deputy Volkov speaks about the unpredictable consequences of the crisis. He says to avoid collapse, powers must be redistributed. The current machinery is unwieldy. There is no threat of dictatorship. He says they currently do not hear the voice of common sense.

Volkov is followed by Deputy Rybkin who says all is not well in Russia. There are concerns about food. The authoritarianism of the recent past is making a comeback. Deputy Lyudskoy of Rabochiy Soyuz and Communists for Democracy then asks: who can take responsibility without power?

At 2111 GMT Khasbulatov says Yeltsin and Silayev have their hands tied. He says he is surprised at Yeltsin's courage. He is the most popular politician in the USSR, so perhaps it would be better if the decision were not adopted: his authority would only be enhanced if he were voted down!

Khasbulatov, back on the platform, asks for a vote, which is passed. A vote on whether to have a secret vote

results in the secret ballot being turned down. The vote on whether to adopt the draft as a whole is carried out, but not passed. A vote on whether to adopt it as a basis is passed.

At 2122 GMT a deputy identified as Vladimir Ilyich mentions a change to the list of members of the drafting committee. More discussion on the membership of the drafting commission follows. A break is announced following the announcements.

The evening session opens with registration. There is debate on the electronic voting system. A quorum is finally achieved. This is followed by a procedural debate. An unidentified deputy wants full television coverage today and complains about absent deputies.

A commission chairman comes to the rostrum at 2139 GMT and notes the three options proposed by the commission dealing with a proposed decision on the Russian state system and the federal and Union treaty. There follows contributions by several deputies. Deputy Kirpichnikov says there should be proper discussion of the drafts.

Khasbulatov asks for vote to end debate on the procedure of the discussion—passed.

Deputy Abdulatipov says he would like the congress to rule on the Russian state system. Khasbulatov reads a list of people who have put their name down to speak.

Deputy Grachev speaks on procedural rules. An announcement is made that named deputies were absent from the meeting of a commission. A deputy asks that a group of deputies be heard. Forty-eight deputies want the floor to be given to Akhmetov. A vote is taken but the motion does not pass. Voting continues on who should be allowed to speak. A list of speakers is read out. Deputy Zasukhin asks to speak for five minutes.

Deputy Desyatnikov speaks and another deputy says all republics have an equal right to be heard.

An unidentified deputy says the USSR is a family that must be rebuilt. He discusses the causes of ethnic clashes and says Russia is being held back by destructive forces. The Communist Party is only 5.7 percent of the population, he says. He doesn't want a pogrom against the communists.

The chairman of Tatar Council of Ministers speaks on development of the autonomous regions as sovereign states. He wants strong links with Russia on the basis of a separate treaty. Tatariya demands to be respected and treated as an equal. He criticizes Yeltsin.

Deputy Zhigaylov from Sakhalin expresses the region's anxieties. The miners there have great problems. The Kurils must not be ceded to the Japanese. Travkin has said this could be done. He recalls the local referendum result against hand-over. Priority must be given to the Union treaty.

Khasbulatov says that Mozayev has complained that a commission lacks a quorum. Deputy Vedernikov says that the relay of the session should be repeated at a time conveninet for northern viewers.

Khasbulatov on Yeltsin Request

LD0404172891 Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian 1515 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Remarks by Ruslan Khasbulatov, firt deputy chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, Supreme Soviet, at the Extraordinary Third Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies in the Kremlin, Moscow on 4 April—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed Comrade People's Deputies, esteemed chairman, I will not be urging you to vote for or against this decision. I want just to say to you—and over the past few days you have seen for yourselves and our much-suffering people have vividly seen for themselves, and indeed not only our people but in my opinion the whole world—that the Russian Supreme Soviet chairman and the Russian Council of Ministers chairman have reminded me of individuals with a noose around their necks and their hands tied. In these conditions you have demanded of these two Russian leaders that they ensure this and ensure that.

Frankly speaking, I am surprised at the tremendous courage of the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, who is asking of you the very smallest pittance, and not only are these not violations of the constitution but they are—well, I do not know, but I would not decide in exchange for the powers and rights that he is seeking from you to take upon myself the colossal responsibility for their implementation. [applause] I do not know how Boris Nikolayevich himself feels about this, but in his place I would be very satisfied if you did not adopt this decision. [laughter]

Why is this? Well, one hardly needs here to reiterate the fact that in our country the most popular individual among the working people, among the intellegentsia, and in general with any person and any social structure is at the present time Comrade Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. [applause]

Isayev on Yeltsin 'Political Behavior'

LD0404171791 Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian 1515 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Remarks by Boris Mikhaylovich Isayev, deputy chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet and people's deputy, at the Third Extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies in the Kremlin, Moscow, on 4 April—recorded]

[Text] I have indeed already said that the chairman's political behavior will lead to paralysis in the activities of the corps of deputies and the Supreme Soviet. Instead of

a return to normal, when this has as a whole been happening at the congress, there is once again an attempt to strengthen the system of personal power. One needs to think of getting Russia out of its crisis and not about personalities.

In the final analysis, the question today is not about Russia but about replacing one dictatorship by another dictatorship. Neither of them suits us, nor does a personality cult suit us.

It is necessary to carry out in a clear-cut way the decisions of the congress and by our joint efforts Russia out of its crisis. Russia must not be pushed into chaos, catastrophe and lawlessness. Thank you for your attention.

Silayev Supports Extra Powers

LD0404174991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1633 GMT 4 Apr 91

[From the "Legislative Diary" program]

[Text] We have already become used to the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] congress habit of taking so- called above-plan breaks, during which the deputies can hold consultations in their groups. Today was no exception. The interval was indeed a lengthy one. After it was over, deputies Shuykov, Baburin, Stepanov, Volkov, Rybkin, and Rutskoy, who spoke on behalf of their groups, were unable to reach any consensus, so to speak. Then Ivan Stepanovich Silayev, chairman of the Russian Council of Ministers, asked to speak:

[Begin Silayev recording] Bearing in mind the alignment of forces that exists, to a certain extent, in the Supreme Soviet, I do not consider that this is some kind of extraordinary, unjust manifestation. This is actual reality. Situations can and will arise in which—bearing in mind the different positions, let's say, held by members of the Supreme Soviet—situations in which certain laws may not be adopted could arise. This will create virtual deadlock. In such circumstances, when the balance of votes makes it impossible to adopt a final decision—and I speak as an interested party in an executive organ of power—it would be extremely important to have this power, to grant this power to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet. It would be a temporary measure, lasting, in practical terms, only a month. Alternatively, one could adopt decisions or introduce temporary documents which could be subsequently endorsed, if they are correct, or rescinded, if they are incorrect, by the Congress of People's Deputies.

That is why, speaking on my own behalf and on behalf of those members of the Presidium whom I have managed to consult, I advocate supporting the way this question has been put.

Thank you for your attention. [end recording]

Congress of People's Deputies 5 Apr Session

Deputies Discuss Final Documents

LD0504082491 Moscow TASS in English 0801 GMT 5 Apr 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent]

[Text] Moscow April 5 TASS—The extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation, meeting here since March 28, continued to discuss a package of final documents today morning. The drafts of three resolutions—on the national and state structure of the Russian Federation, on the results of the republican referendum and on Russia's participation in the new Union treaty—were handed out to deputies in advance.

The fourth document—a draft resolution on the redistribution of powers in top echelons of the republic, was unexpectedly tabled by head of the Russian parliament Boris Yeltsin on Thursday. He asked the congress to vest him and the Russian premier with the right to issue directives binding on the territory of the federation. Yeltsin explained this request by the need to guarantee the efficient implementation of anti-crisis measures.

The idea of strengthening the executive arm was supported by the majority of the congress. However, Yeltsin's draft did not get the required number of votes and was relegated to a specially formed commission for final editing. Work on it is expected to be concluded today.

Presidential Elections 12 Jun

LD0504085391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0845 GMT 5 Apr 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 5 Apr—The Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation today decided to hold the elections for the first president in the history of this, the largest Soviet republic, on 12 June 1991.

The elections will be preceded by the next Congress of Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic People's Deputies, which will open on 21 May.

Yeltsin Granted Extra Powers

LD0504110291 Moscow TASS in English 1051 GMT 5 Apr 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Boris Zverev]

[Text] Moscow April 5 TASS—The extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation today granted Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Boris Yeltsin additional powers to pull the largest Soviet republic out of the crisis. The resolution was approved by 607 votes against 228. One hundred deputies abstained.

The draft of this resolution, requesting broader powers for the head of the Russian parliament, was unexpectedly tabled by Yeltsin on Thursday. He explained this request by the difficulty of anti-crisis measures.

The draft was approved as the basis for further discussion yesterday. Nevertheless, various parliamentary factions today submitted almost 40 amendments and supplements to it. Deputies from the "Russian Communists" and "Russia" factions, Yeltsin's vehement opponents, were particularly aggressive. Their amendments were aimed at hedging the new powers by various reservations.

Most of the amendments were rejected after a two-hour debate. However, the accepted ones helped to define more clearly the new powers of the head of the Russian parliament and premier as compared to the initial text.

The part of the draft calling for "urgent measures to pool society out of the crisis" was supplemented by the words "can be taken within the frameworks of the Russian Constitution in force", which restricts their application.

The words "within the frameworks of the legislation of the Russian Federation" were added to the article vesting the chairman of the Supreme Soviet and prime minister with the right to issue directives binding on the entire territory of the Russian Federation.

The temporary nature of these additional powers is evidenced by the fact that today's resolution will remain in force until Russia acquires a president. The elections of the head of the Russian Federation will be held on June 12, on the day when the first Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation adopted in 1990 a declaration on Russia's state sovereignty.

Today's resolution also expands the inner parliament's powers by transferring to it some of the rights belonging to the Congress of People's Deputies.

Yeltsin thanked the congress for adopting the resolution and assured the deputies that it "will be used only for the good of Russia's peoples".

Yeltsin Thanks Congress for Powers

LD0504100191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 0915 GMT on 5 April broadcasts a five-minute recorded report on today's session of the Russian extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies being held in Moscow.

During the report, Yeltsin thanks the deputies for granting him the additional powers requested by him and says: "I want to thank you on behalf of the Supreme Soviet, the Supreme Soviet Presidium—Ivan Stepanovich [Silayev] do you agree—on behalf of the Council of Ministers, and the chairman of the Council of Ministers, for adopting such a decision and for the trust. I am convinced and declare very firmly that it will be used only in the name of and for the good of the peoples of Russia, in the name of the decision and the resolution that the congress has adopted. Thank you."

Khasbulatov Views Draft Union Treaty's 'Weaknesses'

PM0404151691 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 11, 17-24 Mar p 1

[Interview with RSFSR Supreme Soviet First Vice Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov by Lyudmila Telen; place, date not given; first paragraph is introduction: "Ruslan Khasbulatov: 'We Support the Republics' Efforts'"]

[Text] Shortly before the draft Union Treaty was published, debates about the future USSR's state structure flared up yet again. The latest sensational rumour was this: Russia did not sign the draft. Is this true? Moscow News analyst Lyudmila Telen spoke to Ruslan Khasbulatov, First Vice-Chairman of the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet.

"Following the decision of the group of deputies set up by the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, I signed the working draft of the Union Treaty," he said. "Moreover, I was the first to submit this proposal to my colleagues for discussion."

[Telen] Does this mean you are fully satisfied with the draft prepared by the Republics?

[Khasbulatov] I wouldn't say that. The situation is delicate. One can express dissatisfaction on many points of the draft. But the Republics' representatives have put a lot of work into it, seeking and finding points of agreement and making concessions to one another. Therefore, we decided to support their efforts and make a compromise by accepting the working draft, despite its many weaknesses, as fit for further negotiation.

Strategically, it was an important decision. The Centre has constantly accused Russia of deliberately wrecking the Union. My signature on the draft is the best refutation for such accusations.

[Telen] Nevertheless, Russia is said to have spoken against publication of the draft. Why?

[Khasbulatov] The working group has come to the conclusion that the publication ought to be postponed until the Extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies. Who can anticipate all the complaints Russia's deputies might make about the draft? We thought it reasonable to take their opinions into consideration. I announced this decision to the Federation Council. Unfortunately they did not take heed.

[Telen] Can you foresee which of the Treaty's provisions would be objected to by Russia's deputies?

[Khasbulatov] I would not like to discuss the weaknesses of the draft on my own behalf. Of course, I have my own opinion. I even have my own-alternative-draft which I

feel might have preserved the Union of fifteen Republics. But let's remember that I signed the present draft not as a private individual, but as the head of a working group empowered to do so by the Congress of Russian People's Deputies, and thus expressed the will of the group.

[Telen] Looking back, which of the draft's provisions caused most disagreement among members of the Union?

[Khasbulatov] First of all, I should mention the question about the subjects of the Union. The Centre and many Russian Federation's deputies insisted that the Treaty be signed on an equal footing by the Union and Autonomous Republics. Estimating the possible consequences quite coolly, wouldn't that lead to the disentegration of Russia as a sovereign state?

So what if the Centre and the forces behind it are aiming at exactly this? Not only I, but many deputies see the immense danger of a course, which would result in a dozen midget states instead of one strong Russia. Incidentally, other Republics such as Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and the Ukraine more than share our concern. Which is not the case with the socio-political forces inside Russia who call themselves patriots.

I have in mind, primarily, the Communists of Russia, as a group. Realizing how important the issue is, we proposed that the question of maintaining the integrity of the Russian Federation be put to the ballot, including it in the Russian referendum questionaire. But our opponents launched such a fierce attack on the proposal that the whole idea was abandoned to avoid further confrontation.

[Telen] Is the question of the subjects of the Union and the only one causing heated debate?

[Khasbulatov] Certainly not. There was disagreement over the three types of sovereignty: for the Union, for the Republics, and for the autonomies. Also about the authority delegated under the draft Treaty to the Centre. And about horizontal power structures. All these points have yet to be developed and refined. In short, the draft Union Treaty is only the beginning-just the first step forward.

'Political Dialogue' Conducted on Country's Fate

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[From the "Political Dialogue" program; presented by A.G. Skryabin]

[Text] [Skryabin] Good evening, esteemed viewers. Under the rubric Political Dialogues we have today a direct conversation—your direct conversation with the participants of our broadcast today.

You know, when I tried to define our theme in a few words [words indistinct], I found it rather difficult to do. What we will be talking about in general, however, is the fate of our country and republic and the development of the processes that are taking place within it, and the problems that exist today. You ask—and it is a constant request—that various viewpoints be represented in our programs. We are thus gathered today at this table, and I would like to introduce the participants in today's conversation. They are:

Ivan Ivanovich Antonovich, secretary of the Russian Communist Party [RCP] Central Committee, member of the RCP Politburo;

Yuriy Nikolayevich Afanasyev, co-chairman of the coordinating council of the Democratic Russia movement and co-chairman of the coordinating council of the interregional deputies' group;

Aleksandr Nikolayevich Maltsev, first secretary of the Nizhniy Novgorod City Party Committee of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Communist Party; and

Stepan Stepanovich Sulakshin, cochairman of the Coordinating Council of the Russian Republican Party, which is part of the Demcratic Russia movement.

You can say that we have with us representatives of the democratic movement, Democratic Russia, and the Russian Communist Party. Before we actually get down to our conversation, let me remind you that we have several telephone lines operating. There is just one number: 2174543—just the one number, but there are ten shorthand-typists taking your calls, so we will be waiting for your calls and waiting for your questions to the participants of our program.

Four main topics seem to emerge from the questions you have asked us: How do you assess the situation in our country, and what are, shall we say, the sources of our troubles and how can we overcome them; then, of course, the extraordinary RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies; the USSR and RSFSR referenda; issues concerned with the party and the various social movements and the system of relations among them.

I think we will make these four main problems the subject of our conversation today, although, I repeat, we are awaiting your telephone calls. I remind you that the telephone number is 2174543. You can ask any question you like and we will try to answer as many as possible, although of course we cannot answer all of them.

I would like to begin our converation. I do not think it is necessary for me to cite examples of posed questions. What is wanted, basically, is an assessment of the situation in the country and the nature of our problems, as seen from your point of view. Let us do it that way. Stepan Stepanovich, I would like to start with you.

[Sulakshin] All right, I will start.

[Skryabin] Just a minute—I am sorry. I have one request to make before you start. Let us try to prioritize things and, if possible, restrict each reply to two-three minutes. Over to you.

[Sulakshin] We will do our best. The country is being torn apart by contradictions, by social and political tension, by civil confrontation. That, probably, is the main theme concerning us today. This is all against the background, of course, of a collapsing economy, a falling standard of living and the real worries about everyday life that are steadily becoming more tragic for every citizen of the country. What is the reason for this?

I think the time has come to call a spade a spade. The country previously lived under a socio-political and state system characterized by the rule of a single party, a political organization. All spheres of state life and the economy were influenced by a bloated, centralized state-controlled economy, with all the consequences stemming from that. What is at stake is a natural—not a violent one—a natural change in the socio- political and state system, by parliamentary and constitutional methods, after the people have expressed their wishes.

The principal problems here are the difference in potentials destabilizing the country and tearing it apart, the absolutely dominating role of a single political party, the CPSU, controling 87 percent of the seats in the union parliament, the Congress of USSR People's Deputies, and the USSR Supreme Soviet and completely monopolizing representation in the institution of the presidency and the cabinet of ministers. This party has a completely dominating role. It holds an absolute majority, even though only 6-10 percent of the country's population support this political party.

This is what I mean by the difference in potentials—6 percent public support and 87 percent of the seats in parliament. That is the difference in potentials tearing the country apart and must be overcome. In other words, to use language anybody can understand, this regime embodied in the political structures and the political party dominating them is objectively anti-people because the population and the citizenry do not support this political force.

[Skryabin] Excuse me, where did you get those figures—the 7-10 percent you mentioned?

[Sulakshin] The Republican Party of Russia—and I am co-chairman of its coordinating council—has its own institute of sociological research. This is the result of a poll carried out in Russia on 20 January, 1991. I think we will quote other figures from this poll later.

[Skryabin] Of course. Thank you very much. Aleksandr Nikolayevich, your turn.

[Maltsev] I take a different view of the reasons for the country's crisis. I do not think there is a difference as Stepan Stepanovich mentioned. What is happening is that passions are stirring up and destabilizing the entire situation, both economic and social, in a terrible manner. It is hastening the disintegration of economic ties that began with the attempts to reshape the economic system.

This political stirring-up of passions is having a most unfavorable impact on economic processes. As a result, output is falling. Inflationary processes are intensifying because of strikes and other phenonema, that cost vast amonts of money. The population sees its position worsening. This causes additional tension. As a result, all the processes escalate beyond any reasonable measure. We are moving very rapidly toward a situation where, I fear, there could be only one solution, a solution that would be very harsh. To prevent this happening, to ensure that we emerge by a democratic and civilized path, we must, I think, start with political accord.

[Skryabin] Thank you.

[Maltsev] With civil accord. We must stop stirring up all these passions, in the very worst sense of the word. It will then be possible to commence economic stabilization. I think this is the reason—political instability, first and foremost.

[Skryabin] I know you want to come in now, Yuriy Nikolayevich. I should mention, however, that we will be alternating speakers, so that nobody can complain about bias. Over to you.

[Afanasyev] Aleksandr Nikolayevich has just drawn the viewers' attention to the standard the communists view events. In other words, the whipping-up of passions and, therefore, those who whip them up, those who rock the boat, the people who destabilize the situation, the separatists, nationalists, and so on are to blame for all the misfortunes, all our problems. This standard has already been tested. We all saw the television interview with our president yesterday. He, too, blamed everything on provocateurs. He even suggested that we, the so-called democrats, were manipulating the miners. He depicted us as heroes of ochlocracy, as exponents of mob rule. He blamed all the problems on this, so to speak.

If this were so, it would be a very simple explanation of what is happening. Perhaps we will find the answer in our program today. In addition to setting out my view about what is happening in our society, in our country, I would like to try to look ahead four or five months and only then think about where these problems have actually come. Are we really going to be distracted the whole time by this self-deception, by these claims that there are a few hotheads whose ambitions are not satisfied, who are striving for power and who are tormenting the whole of society, the huge populace—all 300 million of them?

Are there really people who wish to console themselves with this lightweight, superficial explanation of what is happening? I categorically disagree with this explanation, of course. If I have the opportunity, I shall try to give my view of this question.

[Skryabin] Thank you. Ivan Ivanovich, your turn.

[Antonovich] Yuriy Nikolayevich, it has been a long time since I last took part in a television debate with you. I have even begun to miss it. Let us try to avoid categorical assessments. Let us try to come to a joint understanding of what is happening. Aleksandr Nikolayevich referred to something he called the communist standard. In my view he proposed his own democratic standard.

[Afanasyev] I did not propose anything. I...

[Antonovich, interrupting] That is the whole problem. You ask for an evaluation of the present situation. I cannot be any more original than anyone else. I can only say what everyone is saying. The situation is catastrophic or hyper-catastrophic. What are the reasons? That is the main problem. We cannot avoid analyzing them. I consider that there are three groups of reasons. There are the mistakes made during perestroyka itself, that began as an improved form of socialism. In my view the president of the USSR and the CPSU Central Committee general secretary spoke in a very interesting and comprehensive way about these mistakes yesterday.

Second, let us speak the truth. Movements of national separatism, rather than national revival, began to emerge in the country during 1988. They destroyed the existence of a single economic space. The breakup led to bloodshed. Wherever the fractures were big, the bloodshed was copious.

Third, having encountered these difficulties, which I regard as objective ones, or any rate unforeseen consequences, the forces in society advocated perestroyka divided in two. Some of them wanted to continue following the socialist road, others wanted to make a drastic switch toward capitalism. This about-turn led to breakup and confrontation. How can all the damage be repaired?

To begin with, we have to reinstate a single economic organism, so that each part of the country honors its obligations to the rest of it. Second, no progress will be made without civil accord. In other words, we need to put an end to confrontation. Third, we have to remove the analysis of our problems from the squares and streets to the lawfully elected and existing organs of legislation and power. We have two people's deputies with us today—two among hundreds. I have to say that I am proud, for example, of the activities of the USSR Supreme Soviet. It is gaining in stature. It knows how to handle problems. If other legislative institutions had followed this example of analyzing and seeking an answer to problems, by means of legislative action, many of our problems could have been avoided. That is my first answer to your question.

[Skryabin] That is clear. Thank you. I would now like to continue the subject we have started. We have been evaluating the situation in the country. I have received a number of questions—although they do not deal with this subject. I shall later be putting them to you. Where in fact is the way out of the impasse, in your view? Maybe you, Aleksandr Nikolayevich, would like to continue? We find ourselves in this situation today. What, in your view...

[Maltsev, interrupting] Maybe I could begin by examining what kind of impasse this is, if you do not mind?

[Skryabin] Please do.

[Maltsev] I will suggest a way out of it. One should probably see what economists think of it. Views are held by very many economists. I will not list them all. They are, however, putting on record what has already taken shape, what has already happened, and what is programmed to happen, what will inevitably happen in four or five months' time.

What are they saying? First, they say, there will be a fall in output, a fall in the physical volume, probably by 20 percent at least. Second, our finances will have been completely disrupted in six months' time. We will have galloping inflation. Third, the Soviet Union will become completely bankrupt of hard currency. All this will result in mass unemployment, short-time working—there may be millions of unemployed. All this will ultimately express itself in a drastic fall in the quality of life in society and, therefore, increased instability.

All this is not some sort of croaking, nor is it any kind of pressure—it is a harsh and unpleasant restatement of what will evidently be taking place. The complexity of the problem and the situation consists of this—that, again, in view of those who analyze these problems, neither the present people in power, nor those who could replace them will no longer be able to change anything in this sense, over the four or five or six months. The economy has collapsed, the financial system has been destroyed as a result of completely illiterate and incompetent actions of Ryzhkov's and now Pavlov's government—in all, it is Gorbachev's government and his rule.

Consequently, when we broach the subject of getting out of the impasse and when we talk about it, we can only concentrate on, if possible, not making worse what will take place in four or five months. We should now be laying foundations for at least getting on top of the situation in four to five months. This is the question, roughly, and this is how it is seen by very many people. For instance, I share this viewpoint. What does need to be done? Let us, then, talk about that.

[Skryabin] Aleksandr Nikolayevich, I do beg your pardon—it may be that I did not use the phrase, the word, impasse very accurately. What is your view? Does an impasse situation exist in our country now, or does it not? If it does exist, as it were, what are the ways out of it, for all that?

[Maltsev] I would not use the word impasse. Let me put it this way: The situation is a most difficult one, but it is

not hopeless. I invite our collocutors to think for themselves. We are always referring to the views of others. Stepan Stepanovich, from somewhere in your institute you got the figure that, allegedly, only between five and seven percent would vote for the CPSU. We have other statistics.

[Unidentified speaker] Six to ten?

[Maltsev] Between six and ten. Between 33 and 35 would now vote for the CPSU and 30 would be undecided, but would probably vote no. Between 10 and 12 would vote for the democratic forces. So, here you have this specific character of views. It looks like our sociologists look for answers they are comfortable with and they find what they are looking for. The same thing can be said about economists—they, too, were taken in by speculative constructions.

Why do I think that the situation has reached a dead end, but is not devoid of hope? We will not be so pitilessly strict. To what extent did the press, particularly that branch of it which calls itself democratic, make fun of the reform involving the removal of banknotes? I read yesterday in the foreign press—the LOS ANGELES TIMES sends a so-called Newsfax—and they reckoned that this banknote reform put out of circulation approximately 2 billion rubles [R] of these shadow economy notes. I do not personally think that the price reform, regardless of how painful it will be for us, will speed up the inflation processes. It will stop them, perhaps only for the period of time you are speaking. The main thing here is why is it that we are constantly planning either for a period of 500 days, or for four or five months, as if our life stops after this?

[Skryabin] We are not planning, the point here is not plans.

[Maltsev] Alright then, predictions.

[Skryabin] Yes.

[Antonovich] Our life goes on and let us tell people two simple truths we have a tendency to forget. There is no other means to raise public wealth other than a return to normal labor productivity, to normal production discipline, and to modernization of production. It is another matter that our economists are occupied with performing miracles and not a single word is heard any longer about scientific and technical progress. A return to normal labor activity, the restoration of a normal rhythm of labor, and the restoration of a common economic surface tha has been broken. The USSR Government is not only guilty of this, actually. The RSFSR Government, in my view, has still not even started to work. To date, after working for a year, it has not managed to fill all its vacancies. Therefore, yes, the government is guilty of the fact that they waited for the processes of perestroyka to happen of their own accord, but, now at least the union government has started to act, so let us help it by some specific acts of public trust. Let us not arouse fears that the worst possible scenario will definitely be realized in four months time. Perhaps the worst is behind us. We have broken up and quarrelled, and we can see that unless we unite, we cannot get out of this. Let us take a slightly more positive view of things, and I am certain that this approach is expected here. Millions of television viewers—they deserve this from us, they deserve a calmer view of the future.

[Skryabin] Thank you Ivan Ivanovich. Now a Moscow resident, Kudreshova Varvara Ivanovna says: How tired we are of these demagogues—she speaks a little harshly—they talk and talk, and as yet we have seen no action. Aleksandr Nikolayevich, that question is for you. What do you see as the way out?

[Maltsev] This is just what I wanted to speak about. It seems to me, on the whole, that we need to change our orientation and redirect our energies away from political battles, clashes, and attempts to accuse each other of something, taking things superficially, and other things like this, and we should search, generally speaking, for those economic and organizational forms of social interaction that will lead to some sort of change. A change in production, a change in the accord between people, some calm, a change in the political culture. A change in this direction.

Now we communists in Nizhniy Novgorod have become aware of what is our first task in the following way. Democratic Russia held a meeting on 10 March. We also wanted to hold a meeting in reply to this on 16 March, prior to the referendum, but we looked at the way the people reacted to this. They listened and listened to the democrats, who, incidentally did not let us in there—there were only about 20 of us who wanted to speak—but they did not let us in, and the people turned round and left in disappointment.

We decided not to take part in the meeting, but to go and put things right at some of our sore spots, for the spring—at the hospitals and polyclinics, in the parks, and so on. We shall do this, this is the first step toward getting down to doing a little something. Second, we already need to rescue the spring harvest, because the agricultural producers, the collective and state farms, cannot cope with sowing and then with the harvest, and on top of this they have financial problems and technical problems, they must feed the city. We should bring the industrialists together with the agriculturalists, so that industry gives real help, on a contractual basis, on a market basis, and then we will provide for the autumn harvest, then we will avoid this crisis and failures in the food situation.

In industry, similarly, economic ties are disintegrating. Just look how the miners' strike is hitting us. The political passions being wound up about this are making it possible to maintain the heat of this strike and to break up the whole chain, right down to the lowest link, where the metal is not being delivered, but this metal is needed for agricultural machinery. We have already agreed that industry will give help to the rural areas, but there is

nothing with which to help. That is why we have to switch attention from political battles to the resolution of economic problems. In a specific way, at that, on a contractual, market basis. We want to participate in this.

[Skryabin] Thank you, Aleksandr Nikolayevich. [To Sulakshin] Carry on.

[Sulakshin] I would ask for a couple of minutes, since I am still for the time being a member of the USSR Supreme Soviet for issues of the economic reform. Indeed, one could argue endlessly about the particulars, the details, the consequences of the main, basic problem, without this solution all the others cannot be resolved. The essence of the problem is that the state policy that has been conducted in our country, including that in the sphere of the economy, for the entire 73 years is a policy of reforging ideology into a practice of an economic mechanism.

Look at the facts: there existed the idea of communist, socialist construction for the entire 73 years, and the idea of permanent world revolution. This required increased expenditure and efforts from society for defense, for militarization of the economy, and now a sector that does not produce consumer goods occupies approximately 80 percent of the country's economy. Our esteemed Aleksandr Nikolayevich said that it turns out that the miners' strikes are to blame for inflation taking another twist. Not at all! If 80 percent are producing goods that are not bought, then the pay for these workers is not returned to circulation through the tills, and so money has to be printed.

As long as there exists this idea of military-strategic and political confrontation with the whole world, living according to objective economic laws, as long as there exists this hypertrophied militarization of the economy—incidentally, the military budget in this crisis situation has again risen for 1991—then the structural imbalances in the economy will not (?pass), inflation will not be quenched by any means.

The next consideration: our esteemed Ivan Ivanovich has said that we need to return to normal productivity of labor. You see, however, that this economic mechanism, with socialized ownership of the means of production—that is, with a fundamentally Marxist approach whereby the common interest dominates over the private and individual interests—this economic mechanism, as practice has shown in many countries and over many decades, loses out for productivity of labor in industry to the private enterprise mechanism by a factor of two or three times, and up to five times in the agricultural sector.

It is not to my liking, for example, as a citizen of the country, if the Communist Party is now going to turn the processes of perestroyka, initiated toward the so-called normal economic mechanism, and return us to the two to three of five times loss in economic competition with the world, the free world, the world of economic initiative, enterprise and entrepreneurship, and so on. I am totally convinced that if the country is not going to be capable of ridding itself of ideologized state policy, if it is not going to be capable of switching to freedom in the sphere of the economy, to the private enterprise sector as the basic and most efficient sector, as the practice of mankind has shown, then neither will inflation be extinguished, nor will the recession in production nor the reduction in living standards.

The last thing I would like to say is that the forecast, carried out strictly according to an economic and mathematical model, showed as early as last summer that the economic policy first proposed by Ryzhkov's government and supported by President Gorbachev in the stormy debates of last autumn, and is now being consistently implemented by Pavlov's cabinet, is the policy of tackling the collapse of an ideologized economy at the expense of the working people. A confiscatory money reform, price rises, this means transferring the burdens of the financial-economic crisis onto the shoulders of the working people. Meanwhile, a different solution was possible—a rejection of ideology, the putting onto consumer market of new goods, land, real estate, means of production, securities and so on. This has not happened.

[Skryabin] Thank you. Well, first and foremost, I should mention that several comments have come in. Lyubov Ivanovna Voropayeva from Moscow says: I entirely agree with Maltsev. I am not a communist. I do not belong to the party and never have. But I agree with him 100 percent. Other callers are making similar expressions of support for the other side. So you can see how great the range of opinions is.

I would suggest that henceforth we adopt the following procedure. We have received a whole series of telephone calls. People are saying: Dear comrades, as well as conversing among yourselves, would you please answer our questions. The questions are quite hard- hitting. I do not want [words indistinct], but I'm casting aside all those that are insulting either side. Nevertheless I would like to read several quite sharply worded questions, so to speak.

This one's addressed to Afanasyev. It's from Fedor Ivanovich Boldakov in Moscow. There have already been two meetings in support of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. How do you justify the persistent demand for a third meeting? In fact, there are others like that one.

[Afanasyev] The issue here is not just Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, although Yeltsin has become the objective embodiment...

[Skryabin, interrupting] I beg your pardon, but could you please answer these questions very briefly. You have 30-40 seconds.

[Afanasyev] All right. He has become the embodiment, the expression of the need for those reforms just mentioned by Stepan Stepanovich Sulakshin. This is a very fundamental point, a very important point. We do not merely support Yeltsin. We support the course the

Russian Government and the Supreme Soviet are steering—not very consistently and not very confidently, so to speak, at the moment—toward profound reforms, of a structural nature, in the economy and political system, in other words, for the overcoming of this regime. That is why this... [Afanasyev changes thought] In other words, since this problem has not been resolved and is not being tackled, since the measures of the USSR president and Government are directed, aimed in precisely the opposite direction, we consider it essential to return over and over again and demand and seek a change in course, if you like, a change in the political line of the USSR leadership. That is what we are seeking. Yeltsin is conducting a course that democratic forces consider should be supported.

[Skryabin] Vasiliy Nikolayevich Volkov from Moscow has a question for Afanasyev. When will the confrontation with the president end? Why can't they reach agreement with him? After all, he is proposing realistic things. Why whip up an atmosphere of (?point-scoring) in the country? I won't ask you to answer this question.

But there is an equally unpleasant question for you also, Ivan Ivanovich. Sinyavskaya from Moscow has this question for the RCP representative: Esteemed RCP comrade, please explain why your RCP, headed by Polozkov, has butted in on our long-suffering Russia? —Well, I think the actual words used here are a bit strong—I am a mother with a large family. In 45 years I have never joined the Party. Shouldn't our Russian Federation be allowed to decide its own destiny? No doubt that's a question for you.

[Antonovich] For me, I don't see anything insulting in it. They are simply [word indistinct] emotional with us. In the first place, we have not butted in anywhere. We were part of this structure before. The Communist Party of the RSFSR now has 8.6 million members. There are people who have dropped out of it. Quite a lot, in fact. That's another question. I'm not their judge. I would simply like to understand them.

The RCP was founded at a constituent congress last August. It is part of the CPSU. It shares the same rules and suffers from the same ills society suffers. The Russian Communist Party—or the Communist Party of the RSFSR, to give it its official title—has inherited the traditions of the Russian Communist Party, existing for more than a century. Therefore, we are not a chance phenomenon in sociopolitical life. We are a part of the traditions started by our revolutions and our workers' movement and we are, in general, also responsible for everything that takes place in society, just like other democratic forces, both those who call themselves democratic and those criticizing us for being undemocratic.

All the same, I would like to comment briefly, as part of the discussion, about the meetings. I believe today—and I know that my view is shared by many Communists—do we really need another meeting today, when it's always the same people on the platform? I understand the people who attend these meetings. They are very, very worried about the future. But I also know that a significant proportion, half maybe, of all the participants leave before the end of the meeting. I also understand that. These meetings have become monotonous and boring, with one and the same monologues and one and the same people. This is not a manifestation of democracy. This is something else. If it was democracy, there would be different people. There would be a variety of opinions. We have not been given a single opportunity to address any one of these meetings in Moscow, where you, Yuriy Nikolayevich, are almost a permanent participant. We were not allowed to address the inaugural congress of the Republican Party of Russia [RPR] represented by Stepan Stepanovich here, although he represented a wing that broke away from the CPSU and the Communist Party of the RSFSR. This is not a manifestation of democracy. It is an attempt to exert massive pressure on public opinion and to inflame it.

Therefore, these questions that are coming in are a reflection of our society's emotions, and I view them as objectively as possible. I understand why people are annoyed, why they often ask unjust questions. But I would ask the viewers to understand us, too. We are part of the political landscape in this country. Our path is paved with both successes and failures and we wish to learn, along with everyone else, from our bitter experience so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past, and so that we can build a better future. But we are quarreling about yesterday. This is felt more strongly at rallies than anywhere else. So I have doubts on this count.

[Skryabin] Thank you. I now have a whole series of general and individual statements addressed to you and to you. So here is one for you, Ivan Ivanovich: In our opinion, the sympathizers and supporters of the CPSU are not behaving properly. We are in complete agreement with Afanasyev. There is also a counter statement, put by [name indistinct] to the Democrats, saying: Your policy is completely wrong.

So here is the question—maybe you'll allow me to ask you, Stepan Stepanovich—Vasiliy Mikhaylovich Yeliseyev, a retiree and war and labor veteran from Moscow asks: How many renegades are there in your party of democrats who are former members of the CPSU, and how is this to be explained?

[Sulakshin] That is a remarkable question, but I would be so bold as to assert that the renegades are the ones who stayed in the CPSU and RCP. I don't want to say anything insulting about my colleagues. But in actual fact communists who entered the party consistently perhaps deceived themselves, or perhaps were deceived, since at that time we didn't know a lot of things about the kind of structure it was, what its real methodology was, what it was in practice, what its results were. We have found all this out now.

They joined it with sincerity and with consistency, to build a communist society. This was written as the aim in the program and the charter of that party. But recently there has been a turnabout in the Communist Party, it has in essence turned into a social democratic one, because the aim is now the building of humane, democratic socialism. If you turn those two words round, democratic socialism, you will get a social democratic aim, and the communist one is merely in the future.

So let me ask the esteemed Communists, the consistent members of that party: Your party has changed its aims, but you remain in it. You now know its whole essence, all the lowdown on this party; you know how many crimes this organization has perpetrated; you see the colossal analogy with the National Socialist Party, you see the analogy in the organizational methods and the ideological setting of aims, in the doctrinarire approach both to violence and to the construction of some bright future for society as formed by parties in other totalitarian regimes as well; and knowing all this, you continue to be members of that party. Where then is your intelligence, honor, and conscience when you remain in that party after realizing all this? I believe that the ones who left are the ones who did not betray themselves. [passage indistinct as several speak together]

Excuse me, I'll finish, and of course you will respond. Those who really preserve their intelligence, honor, and conscience, who with that imperative joined that political party, have not betrayed themselves, but they are in the political opposition to that party.

[Skryabin] I see. Go ahead Aleksandr Nikolayevich.

[Maltsev] I want to respond, first because it seems that we gathered here to talk constructively, and before the beginning of the program that's what we were saying. Now we are getting: the best form of defense is attack. We are being attacked again. We are not attacking, and don't let us get involved in that.

But if we are to explain our motives, why am I in that party? I joined it in 1985, in the very hope for a renewal of the society that I didn't like at all as it was, although I very much like the communist idea in its original sense as elaborated by Marx.

Let me tell you that no social democratic turnabout has happened in the party. What has happened is an awareness of the fact that we were not building the right socialism in fact, but were building God knows what, some sort of authoritarian-bureaucratic system.

Now we are raising the question of the construction of socialism in the original meaning of the word, a humane and democratic one. But that is very far from the model you are talking of, the social democratic one. In words maybe it recalls it, but in content it does not.

[Sulakshin] Then maybe I can pass on to you a question my voters often ask me: What is humane democratic socialism, then?

[Maltsev] I would put it like this, that it is the social democratic model turned completely upside down. If underlying the social democratic model there is private property as the basis of the economic system, and all other forms of property, including state property, are superstructure, here it is the opposite: the collective form of property, first of all national, collective property, the property of labor collective, and state property lie at its basis, and it is the same with the political system...

[Skryabin, interrupting] We are getting away from the question.

[Antonovich] Just a couple of words in reply. Stepan Stepanovich, you said that the renegades have been left in the CPSU. That is, 18 million people. If you are both a democrat and a member of the intelligentsia, you should be more careful in using the airwaves to insult even one of them, while you have insulted 18. However, I have to say that it is not that the renegades have stayed in the CPSU. Those who have left the CPSU have done so at a very grave time for it. Those who at a very grave time leave a party they have long been members of are probably more deserving of that word.

But here there is something else of fundamental importance. Yuriy Nikolayevich, you are the initiator of a so-called public trial of the CPSU. Let's be honest. You spent about 30 years in the party, and you were in it for several years [Antonovich points to Afanasyev and Sulakshin]. Start the trial with yourselves first, and then go on to others.

But why are you behaving like private detectives, setting up a kangaroo court? In the democratic society, in the state based on law we are aspiring to, it is only the Constitutional Court that can set up a trial. But you, our democrats, people's deputies, legislators, are choosing public homes outside law and order, judicial and legislative departments, and are setting up a lynch trial of 18 million people. It's not good.

[Afanasyev] It's not good.

[Antonovich] A kangaroo court means lynch rule. It is one and the same thing. I stick to this. If there is any judging to be done, why don't you start with yourselves? Judge not, lest ye yourselves be judged.

[Afanasyev] Well, of course, I too feel uncomfortable speaking in some sort of cliches, but here is another version we encounter, that is hard to describe, because, if you'll excuse me, Ivan Ivanovich, there is some dishonesty here. You are saying that we are preparing to hold a lynch trial of 18 million members of the CPSU, and in addition you counted in the members of their families and reached something like....

[Antonovich] Where did I count it up?

[Afanasyev] Well, I know, it was you, or your comrades. You alleged that we are demanding this. This is absolutely not true. As for your direct question, I will answer honestly how I understand this concept of a trial of the CPSU.

As for me personally, I have many times, in articles, and in books, said, I think, very bitter words about myself. I have condemned myself, maybe not yet to the very end. Maybe it needs to be continued. But I tried to start with myself. If you want, I am ready to repeat in front of this huge auditorium all the reproaches to myself that maybe are like a repentance.

But now, as for this trial of the CPSU, we are not suggesting trying the members of the CPSU. We are talking about how the idea needs to judged, to dig down to the truth as to what the CPSU is as a social and political institution. That's to say, not a trial meaning the imposition of a sentence, not like condemnation, not like vengeance, but a trial in the sense of reaching the truth.

Another important factor I would like to mention. I would not be very thrilled by this idea of a trial of the CPSU. But I am more impressed by the aspiration (?of those who are there, to look) at themselves, and to look at where we all went wrong, because if we see the enemy in the CPSU, we will again go down the traditional path, down those little side paths we followed shouting about enemies and saboteurs, the Trotskiyites, Bukharinites, Jews, and so on and so forth. That's to say, we will again search for the cause of our ills not in ourselves, not in our society, but somewhere on the side, for example in the CPSU. So I, for example, understand this very well.

But why do you distort the essence of our positions, in front of all the viewers? You are distorting the essence. [words indistinct as several speak together]

I repeat once again: We are not so naive, not such naive fools as not to realize that among all the 16 million [figure as heard] Communists there are the most honest people, and it would be blasphemy to hold a trial of those people.

[?Antonovich] Then you are judging an abstraction? You have to be logical.

[Afanasyev] That's a subject I wouldn't even like to continue, because it isn't an abstraction that we will judge, or are judging, rather. We are trying to understand where our troubles come from. That's to say, what we started the conversation with. It really does turn out like this. Esteemed Aleksandr Nikolayevich is calling on us to turn to specific things. Let us get on with specific deeds. Let us hold a voluntary working Sunday at the hospital, gather potatoes, so to say, less words and more deeds. But if we do not dig down to the bottom and find the causes of this monstrous crisis; if we do not understand that it stems from the fact that we created some sort of totally impracticable monster in the form of real socialism; if we do not formulate aims of overcoming this regime and this structure we shall move or, more accurately, continue our movement from bad to worse and we shall never get anywhere good. We shall not get there, even in six months. Now we are once again being invited to go for an outing toward the communist future on the basis of the socialist choice made by the grandparents of our president. That is another hundred years.

[Skryabin] I think, well let us...

[Antonovich] Let me give a brief response to that.

[Skryabin] Go ahead.

[Antonovich] Comrades, I would ask all of us to adhere to a certain ethical level and not call anyone a fool. But as soon as you judge anyone you are digging graves. Then you need to dig down into the graves dug in 1941-1945 for the hundreds of thousands of communists, to get to the bottom of who died their own deaths and who in some other way. Then we shall be digging into the past instead of moving forward. Comrades, be wiser than that. We have had enough hatred. We have had enough of whipping up courts by one's own forces; we have had enough lynch law. There have been a lot of these. Do not go on in this way. It is necessary to be objective, democratic, and aware of the power of television.

[Maltsev] I would like to add something to this. I totally agree with Yuriy Nikolayevich with regard to the purely scholastic raising of the question. I am also engaged in studying this, and generally speaking that is my work. But there is logic and life. I was obliged to get involved with something which was not my affair, because the idea of such courts, in general the idea of destruction, spills out onto the streets. It is not an academic idea for research. It moves out onto the streets where slogans start to appear: Hang the communists. It turns virtually into the practice of genocide, proposed against communists. Moral terror has already begun. Legal bans have already begun. There is already even some sort of capital punishment proposed in the legislation in the Baltics.

And these processes begin with us, Yuriy Nikolayevich. These ideas have social and political consequences, you understand. That is where the trouble lies. So let us give up this rally-type attitude. Let us be involved in this investigation. We have to dig things up. I would also like to be involved in this, but am forced to involve myself in other things. Not digging potatoes, but creating the economic conditions so that those who are involved in this dig them. Searching for those new economic forms which work, and not those which are collapsing every day, in each of the latest programs. That is what I mean.

[Sulakshin] You have touched upon a very important point, thesis. Indeed, there is an emotional excess in our society. Indeed, there will be a witch-hunt, as the post-communist phases in Eastern Europe show. This problem must be studied and it must be shown and proven to these people that, of course, not 18 million communists but far less, evidently, bear only moral culpability, because even by their dues they are supporting the juridical face of an organization which,

according to international law and Soviet legislature, when you study this issue, is forbidden. Moreover, elements of its activity are banned as crimes against humanity.

[Antonovich] Mob-law, again.

[Sulakshin] It is very important. Excuse me, Ivan Ivanovich, it is not mob-law—it is very important to show the difference in responsibility between that of the rank and file communists, which is only moral, and that of high-ranking political party functionaries who have been making decisions, criminal decisions in the economy, and decisions concerning Tbilisi, Baku, and Vilnius—this is going on today.

By the way, the First USSR Congress of People's Deputies—a legislative commission conducted an investigation, named the high-ranking party functionaries, passed a verdict of gross violation of the law, and in a civilized society some measure of responsibility should thereby ensue, but it has not ensued in any way whatsoever.

I am finishing up. There is an international law for organizations which determines if they are criminal, which should be prohibited, and their measure of responsibility. Even at Nuremberg, when the Nazi party was tried, did not try its members, it excepted them, it was only the leading organs of the Nazi party that were condemned, and people have to know that—it is not mob-law, it is a civilized approach to the problem of responsibility...

[Antonovich, interrupting] ...I ask for the right to reply. Regarding Nuremberg, how easily we get concepts mixed up. In Nuremberg it was not the Nazi Party that was being tried, but Nazism as a misanthropic ideology according to a UN decision on mass crimes against humanity. Stepan Stepanovich is himself developing the concept of a court, and actively peddles it under the cover of Nuremberg. These are different categories, and different degrees of legislative initiative. You are judging without the law, for ideological motives, but there it was the international community that was judging under a law established by the new UN which was born as a result of a struggle, a military struggle, with great sacrifices, against fascism, and I would propose that millions of viewers could tire of this debate. Enough ideology, let us answer the questions posed by television viewers.

[Skryabin] There will be ideology...[changes thought] Here is a question from a viewer to all of you: The concept of communist—does it not preclude the concept of democrat, and vice versa, asks Vasilyev from Kishinev. By the way, here is another question for all of you: How do the guests of direct dialogue assess the current role of the teacher, and where, in your view, does the essence of a de-ideologized system of education lie, asks Rafael Saitovich Kazanov, participant in the all-Russian conference of public education staff. This is clearly one for you...

[Unidentified speaker, interrupting] ...Let us all reply.

[Skryabin] Yes, Okay.

[Unidentified speaker] Very briefly.

[Skryabin] Who is ready immediately, so we do not waste time?

[Afanasyev] You know, our school is indeed ideologized, to such an extent that it becomes transformed into something directly opposed to its designation, and in this sense there is a colossal amount of work to do, so that schoolchildren might gain knowledge, so that they might form the skills of thinking, so they do not have to go through this drill, and so they might simply become normal people.

The situation you have comes with this: kindergarten and school cripple people in the literal sense of the word, now we are, of course, getting away from this—and the process is completed by the Soviet Army. That is, the destruction of the human element in human beings is actually in ideologized secondary school. How are we to get away from this—we need to turn both the content and the methods of education upside down very, very strongly, both in schools and in colleges. In point of fact, that is what we are currently engaged in.

[Antonovich] Can I make a brief comment? In the first place, not only do I not think that the word communist precludes democrat, I think that the one pre-supposes the other, I would suggest that the comrade democrats might become communist again, if they do not constantly remain communists we will not get out of the crisis very easily. If someone has already done a 180-degree turn, he can make another, viewers should know that. Concerning teachers and schools, however, the situation is much more complex.

Let us take a broader look at these issues. I do not quite understand why you have lumped everything together. This is probably ideological motivation. Yuriy Nikolayevich, let us be frank—you are the most ideologized rector in the country, you are the only rector in Europe who goes to a rally and, as a deputy and legislator, invites the overthrow of the legitimate government, legitimate power, and calls crowds of people to act only through: Down with. You have: Down with the CPSU—I read your interviews—you have: Down with authority and Down with the Supreme Soviet".

You are the most ideologized rector, so why do you take up arms like this against the ideologization of education? You and I have studied the history of culture, we have appropriate works—at all times, those who have taught have passed on their world view, their faith, their values, so let us at least fill values with common human content, love and compassion for our neighbors, knowledge and culture, and not reproach one another with ideologization. We are all ideologized, we all believe in something, let us respect one another's beliefs, otherwise we will have nothing and we will settle our accounts not in legislative institutions, not in courts, but at rallies. It is

only you who has perfected: Down with through a megaphone—we do not go to rallies.

[Afanasyev] My dear Ivan Ivanovich, if we meet again, I would like...

[Antonovich, interrupting] I hope we meet again.

[Unidentified speaker] I hope so, too.

[Afanasyev] I would like you to quote precisely at least one such: Down with. I somehow feel badly about this, to be frank. You ascribe to me what I have not uttered on a single occasion, neither verbally nor in writing. Who do you do that? Why? I have never, anywhere, shouted: Down with. I have always said: Let us get to the bottom of what it is all about, let us realize what our system is, what our president is, what the CPSU is. Let us first of all get to the bottom of all this, and understand as deeply as possible the source of our ills. This is what I have said, and I have adduced arguments on this account, but I have never said Down with.

[Antonovich] Yuriy Nikolayevich, read your own interview, it was recently published in the ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA or the NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, one of the two...

[Afanasyev, interrupting] Why should I have to read it?

[Maltsev] We could carry on like this, we have this squabbling again. I would like to get away from this, and move to the economic level. Schools or economies being unideological does not occur. There is always some kind of ideology—the question lies in its nature and its quality. What Stepan Stepanovich said about individualism and about the priority of individual interests over common interests, this is also ideology, but inverted.

It seems to me, however, that what is needed here is not ideology that is inverted, but ideology that combines in reasonable measure, in reasonable combination, both the collective principle and the individualist principle, both the common and the individual, and then, through this measure, we will find a way out of the present situation, in the economy, and similarly with schools.

You see, elements of enterprising ideology will also be incorporated in the schools, through an education program. You cannot get away from this, it will be re-ideologized, but the emphasis probably now really needs to be placed on common human values, on human rights—that is ideology, too, but a normal human ideology. That is the ideology I favor.

[Skryabin] Fine. Excuse me, I'll make use of my right as chairman, after all, we don't have much time left, you know, we have four main areas we wanted to look at and we're already behind. You know what, look, you have differing points of view, and the viewers have the same differing points of view. For example, Yuliya Dmitryevna Sakharova says that if you're the Russian party you should feel for the Russian people and not throw wrenches in the works for the Russian government, and you're not allowing it to work. That's on one side. On the other side, Mikhail Grigoryevich Chuvrakov from Lipetsk says to Comrade Afanasyev: Why does the Democratic Party—he means democratic forces, of course—work everywhere on ruining our state, on destroying soviet power and the peversion of communism? Who needs this? I don't understand what the democrats actually want, I'm not in the party, please explain. And you know, here are two specific questions, for both sides. The first question: Yevgeniy Vasilyevich Zhukov—well, among the whole number of things, he asks: What is Democratic Russia doing to escape from the deadlock and what program does it have on this issue apart from rallies? Which of you wants to reply?

[Sulakshin] I'll begin, as the Russian Republican Party...

[Skryabin] I would ask you to begin very briefly! If you can.

[Sulakshin] ... as it's a party that belongs to the Democratic Russia movement, is convinced that not one of the country's problems can be resolved unless you resolve the fundamental problem, the problem of power, and more precisely, the problem of the place and role of the CPSU in the country as the ruling party. We construct our activity both on the parliamentary platform, and in extraparliamentary structures, to resolve this problem. Alternative economic proposals are accordingly also being drawn up, and for the social restructuring of the country, and on our country's foreign policy outlook, and it cannot be said that our activity is limited only to rallies. There are deputies' factions in the union soviets, in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and in local soviets, and one each of these platforms we are striving for certain definite, specific successes within the scope of our economic program.

[Afanasyev] I'll add something to that.

[Skryabin] Go on.

[Afanasyev] Tomorrow there's the Congress, the Congress of People's Deputies of Russia. What would the democratic forces of Russia like to support? First, for the Congress to adopt a decision on the presidency, and as quickly as possible, a law on the presidency. Second, for this Congress to resolve the very important problem of executive power at all levels, that is, so that the executive organs of power are elected in the rayons, the oblasts and the republics. Third—perhaps this is first—the agrarian problem has to be resolved, in the terms and scope that were outlined by the Congress and Supreme Soviet of Russia.

These are the most important problems, it seems to me, but the situation again turns out to be quite strange. Russian People's Deputies are gathering escorted by the union government, that is, Russia, Moscow, don't have—that is, Russia doesn't have either a capital, or a home where they can gather, they don't even have the responsibility, as it were, of dealing with where they should go, or how to conduct the Congress. The situation

is really paradoxical. By illegal, anticonstitutional decrees, the militia organs have been removed from the jurisdiction of Russia and the Moscow Soviet, they have decided to surround the congress with troop units.

[Antonovich] You're getting off the point a bit, these are issues...

[Afanasyev] How can you resolve the issues of Russian sovereignty and independence, and in particular those which I have designated, how can you resolve them in these conditions? This is what Stepan Stepanovich said, the political problem's don't provide the possibility of resolving what is essential and what needs to be resolved in the economy.

[Antonovich] On condition that we all speak briefly—everything's clear with Stepan Stepanovich. For him the fundamental problem is the problem of power, and the fundamental point in this aspect of the problem is to take is from the CPSU. All this is indeed clear. Everything's much more complex than that. Take it—but why don't you take it by democratic means, instead of trying to take it at rallies? Take it—in parliament. This is the main issue.

Yuriy Nikolayevich, my dear chap, do you seriously think that anyone is going to dictate to the Russian Supreme Soviet where it should hold its session—on its premises, on the Embankment or in the Kremlin. Everthing belongs to the government of Russia. But it was I who criticized the government of Russia, you know, it's a bad government that is hampered in its work, it should take authority and put things into effect. If a government can't staff itself over a year of work, we have a right to criticize it. But as regards a law on the presidency, I'll say just a couple of words, just briefly: everything is much more serious, you want a law on a Russian presidency to be adopted as quickly as possible, but I would like it to be adopted as dispassionately as possible. Why? I don't intend to get confounded with general figures, and they still can't count in the Russian Supreme Soviet, because Boris Nikolayevich gave one directive on the poll, then there turns out to be another, and there's nothing to verify with, there's no law on referendums. But I cannot fail to draw your attention to the fact that 14 of 16 autonomous formations voted against the presidency, and for this reason, until we resolve the issue with the autonomous formations, until we restore some kind of social and legal justice in the subject of the Russian presidency—it must not be resolved quickly, it musn't be scribbled, we need to work through this very carefully, legally correctly, listening to the will of the people, the will of the autonomous formations, the will of multinational Russia; only then will we manage to preserve her, otherwise we'll have 20 presidents in Russia, too, as we now have several of them in the country. This is a very complex issue, you must not rush, you must not rush to seize power, you have to think whether you'll be able to carry it out for the good of the people. I am debating this for the second time with Stepan Stepanovich, but he hasn't listened once.

[Sulakshin] Ivan Ivanovich, do your recommendations also extend to the union president? I have in mind the Fourth USSR Congress of People's Deputies that even changed the constitution hastily.

[Antonovich] I'll reply: the Fourth USSR Congress of People's Deputies adopted a law on the presidency and in accordance with the law elected the president of the USSR. Not a single congress of the RSFSR has passed a law on a presidency, and the same goes for a law on referendums. That's where the great legal tragedy of its situation lies.

[Sulakshin] I have to correct the member of the Russian Party Politburo: a Russian law on referendums has been passed, is in force, and the referendum was held in accordance with it.

[Antonovich] I have to correct Stepan Stepanovich: a Russian law on referendums has been passed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, not by the Congress of People's Deputies, and that's where the great difference lies between the two statuses of presidency. I have to keep to the truth.

[Maltsev] Can I move from politics to economics?

[Skryabin] Yes, let's try.

[Maltsev] I have a question from Nizhniy Novgorod, from Nikolay Vasiliyevich Savkinskiy: There is virtually a famine in Nizhniy Novgorod and this is a result of everything that has happened over these past three years. You are in favor of a socialist future, once again the light at the end of the tunnel. But what will happen next? Well, God be with him. I am even prepared to renounce the word socialist. But let us look at this matter. There is not yet any famine in Nizhniy Novgorod. But if we go on chattering, if we go on engaging in all these rallies and discussing all these problems and this political butting, so to say, there will be a famine.

To prevent one now, we must carry out the reform of agriculture in a competent manner and not in the way that is being proposed, inter alia, by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet where it is written: give 10 percent of arable land to the townspeople. We are beginning to study this problem and we see that the townspeople want to have this land in the suburban zone—all our suburban zone is sown to vegetables by state farms. If they take it away there will be a collapse in production and in the fall there will be famine. That means we must seek out some constructive ways out. Let us direct efforts in that direction, let us give thought to these things.

There is a lack of competence in the economy. Everything has gone to the devil because of incompetence. This is what we should be engaged in now. And politics a bit later when we start to get out of this economic crisis. Power is not the obstacle here but rather economic incompetence, or unwillingness to engage in these matters. It is easy to hold a rally but it is very difficult to arrange smooth economic links.

[Sulakshin] So who has made it collapse and who is incompetent?

[Skryabin] Well, you said at the start...

[Maltsev] By the way, look at the laws that are being adopted by the Supreme Soviet.

[Skryabin] You consider yourselves to be democrats.

[Afanasyev] No, we do not think this, we have a much more complicated analysis.

[Maltsev] Of course, the communists have made a vast number of mistakes.

[Skryabin] Right. You know what I have here, well I would like to move from the economy to politics. Yelena Nikolayevna Belova asks at whose initiative are we to have the congress and why do we need an extraordinary Congress of Russia. There are several similar questions and a number of telephone calls ask the question: it is being said that the Congress has been imposed by the Russian communists and is that Congress necessary or is it not necessary. That is the overall sense. I would like both sides to answer. Who is ready? Perhaps you, Yuriy Nikolayevich.

[Afanasyev] Well, I have already begun to answer this. This congress is really being held on the initiative and at the demand of the communists. Their intentions then, at the start, were to remove Yeltsin from the leadership of the Supreme Soviet. I do not think they still have those intentions now.

I think that the intentions of the communists at the Congress are different: to leave Yeltsin at the head of the Supreme Soviet of Russia but to leave him in the same powerless situation as he has been up to now. That is, to leave this power as purely decorative as it is now and as far as possible after some time to redirect the dissatisfaction of the people, including the people of Russia, against Yeltsin. That, it seems is the real aim of the communists of Russia at the Congress, today. I do not think that they will try to achieve the removal of Yeltsin because they understand that this will turn out to be even more of a defeat for them and even more of a strengthening of the prestige of Yeltsin in Russia. But I am sure that Yeltsin will present for discussion by the Congress specific measures, including some of those which we have named here—economic and political measures which are capable of extricating Russia from the crisis. And it is on this that the Congress should concentrate all of its attention. For, the rally which we are trying to hold, to tell the truth, is aimed precisely at this: that the Congress should discuss vital problems of Russia.

[Antonovich] There is no need to hold a rally. Yuriy Nikolayevich, this is the first time today that you have used the words "it seems", and this reflects your doubts. I am grateful to you for the doubts. But the way our conversation has been going it would seem that noone has any doubts. But I have come here with many of them.

I do not know what you mean when you speak of Yeltsin's powerlessness. I would prefer not to comment on that. I would like to clarify one fact. The Extraordinary Congress of the RSFSR is being convened at the demand of the group of economic leaders, not of the communists. That is very important. It is a different matter that the communists supported this demand, because the economy of Russia really is in a state of collapse and it is essential to listen to a report from the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on its activity over the past year, to understand the reasons remaining from the past and that there are now no secret plots to replace anyone. No, the communists of Russia are going to the Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR to listen to a report from the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on its activity over the past year.

If there is a program, the communists of Russia with great interest and activity will join in constructive discussion. That will be something new at this Congress because as yet there—I am not a deputy and I have the right to criticize as an elector—as yet, in my view procedural matters have been too predominant there. Therefore, no one is engaged in intrigues to remove anyone. We simply want jointly, openly, and democratically to get to the bottom of who is to blame for the crisis and how we are to get out of it. And nothing else.

[Sulakshin] Ivan Ivanovich, it will evidently be very interesting for you to hear of the theses elaborated by the group of deputies—communists of Russia in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. The theses are these: to demand not a report from the chairman of the Supreme Soviet as is stated in the agenda but a report-back account. The question of the miners and the question of the attitude to the president of the country should be rejected straight away. I am quoting. The decree on power and the privatization of the property of the CPSU should not be discussed as this is contrary to the constitution. This thesis simply disproves what you said.

[Skryabin] Is this an official document? Please understand, I am not coming down on either side.

[Sulakshin] Yes, I am reading it and so...

[Skryabin] Is this an official document or is to so to say...

[Sulakshin] These are the theses of the meeting of the group of communists of Russia. Every communist who speaks should conclude his speech in the following manner: The political course of Yeltsin does not promote the implementation of the decisions of the Congresses and therefore, we consider it essential to recall him from the post of chairman. This concludes quite remarkably. After a speech by a communist there should be concerted applause and shouts of approval. We should be more unrestrained that at previous Congresses. We have 87 percent and we should...

[Antonovich] This is yet another product of a private detective. You have a tendency to self-criticism. I can

state officially before millions of television viewers that such an interesting document has never been discussed in the Communist Party of the RSFSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the RSFSR that I represent here. Therefore, check your sources much better and present to the millions of television viewers only offcial documents.

[Skryabin] Thank you, let us not discuss this problem now. We are getting toward the end of our time. Did you want to say something, Aleksandr Nikolayevich?

[Maltsev] Yes, I would like to say how curious it is turning out. Evidently, Yuriy Nikolayevich has his own information. He says that the communists of Russia would not raise the question of the resignation of Yeltsin. On the other hand a document from heaven knows where is read out...

[Antonovich] Insist, insist, I said. That is my supposition...

[Maltsev] ...and in this document it says that everyone should finish off in this way. It seems to me that this could be some kind of provocation. Let us wait see what happens tomorrow.

[Skryabin] You know, with such a wide spread of opinions we see from these telephone calls and from the discussion we have had, to tell the truth, the following question comes to mind and I think it will have occured to the viewers, too. How are we to go on when we have such a wide spread of opinions, when what we need today is consolidation, and so on and so on.

You know, we are now coming to the end of the program. I have a general question to you all. I would ask you to reply to it in literally 30 seconds. We have very little time left, In your view, what is the most important thing that should be done so that our people and our country should live better, should live in a human manner, should live in the way it is worthy of? Stepan Stepanovich, over to you.

[Sulakshin] We should return to the road of world civilization. We should turn our totalitarian system into a modern, civilized state, change the place and the role of Leninist-type vanguard party in the socio-political and economic structure of our country.

[Skryabin] I see. Thank you. Aleksandr Nikolayevich.

[Maltsev] Our system is no longer totalitarian. Poland returned to this main road and obtained an economic crisis. I think that it will be even worse in our country. We must stop the political battles and get down to organizing production and social relations.

[Skryabin] Thank you. Yuriy Nikolayevich.

[Afansayev] I think that we must in the final analysis to say loudly and clearly that the communist idea is bankrupt and that it has no future at all and we should build life in such a way as to make the dream of Chadayev come true: to join with humanity.

[Skryabin] Thank you.

[Antonovich] You see how those who denied the importance of ideology have ended with absolutely ideological axioms, let us say carefully. Everything is simpler for me: to live better we must work better; to work better we must restore civic accord and order; and then we shall see that we never left world civilization and that we occupy within it our worthy place, a difficult place, but our own. We have saved this civilization on several occasions. That did happen. But we never left it.

[Skryabin] Thank you. I am in an even more difficult situation. Look at all of these questions handed to me today. Unfortunately, I must apologize to our esteemed viewers. We cannot physically reply to all of them. We tried as far as we could to select the most typical questions. I thank you, comrade television viewers, for sitting up by your television sets at such a late hour. Thanks, too, to all the participants in our rather difficult, I would say, discussion. I hope that here in Ostankina we shall continue such rather difficult conversations. Thank you. All the best.

Rutskoy on New Group 'Communists for Democracy'

LD0304103391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 0500 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Interview with Aleksandr Vladimirovich Rutskoy, People's Deputy of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, and chairman of a Supreme Soviet committee, by legislative correspondent Olga Vasilenko "in the corridors" of the Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies in the Kremlin, Moscow; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Vasilenko] I invited Aleksandr Vladimirovich Rutskoy, People's Deputy of the RSFSR and chairman of one of the Supreme Soviet committees to the microphone. As is known, Aleksandr Vladimirovich came out at the congress as the initiator for creation of yet another deputies' group, which I ask you now to talk about.

[Rutskoy] I made an official statement at the Congress of People's Deputies to create a group of Communists for Democracy, to bring together people of common sense who consider that the idea of a roundtable discussion should be introduced immediately. The work of the congress that is underway today is being criticized not only by people's deputies, but also by our electors. People have simply become fed up with watching this show; and people's deputies with common sense simply want one thing: constructive work, and a solution to the problems which are essential for the people.

The Communist Party of Russia called itself the party for the social protection of the workers. But you know, strange though it may seem, although I am a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of

Russia, it is not just that I have seen no real solution to any problem in the social protection of workers during its existence, but that there has been only a whipping up of the developing situation in our country.

[Vasilenko] You know, Aleksandr Vladimirovich, there are calls for consolidation, for constructive solutions to problems coming from each side, and each side considers itself to be right...

[Rutskoy, interrupting] You know, there are still some concepts, and I believe that they have somehow been preserved among the people of the RSFSR: morality, decency, honor, conscience. You see, this is being done by people who do not sufficiently fulfill these concepts. Why? Because literally an hour before an upcoming speech, they come out with clearly confrontational positions. And then an hour later they come up to the microphone and call for consolidation. You can't behave like that. You have to be consistent.

We are now creating a group, not simply a deputies' group, but a deputies' group of the legislative Communist Party, which will indeed defend the interests of the workers right here at the congress. But in order to go on acting and to bring the broader masses, the broad public, into our activity, we intend to draft a program, a charter, an appeal to the workers, to create a public movement, a democratic platform within the ranks of the CPSU [as heard] and to register this parliamentary deputies' party as a public organization supporting democracy. Non-party people, members of the CPSU, and people who have left the CPSU can all join.

The main task today is not that we should divide ourselves into camps of democrats, social democrats, peasants and communists, but the task is just one: to save the motherland, to fight for solutions, for constructive solutions to all the social and economic programs facing our society.

MOSCOW NEWS: CPSU 'Cannot Be Changed'

PM0404152091 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 11, 17-24 Mar 91 p 3

[Article by MOSCOW NEWS deputy chief editor Viktor Loshak: "The Russian Communist Party Refuses To Change"]

[Text] The CPSU is strong even because it is impossible to live in this country and ignore what is happening inside this party. This is especially true of people like myself who, living in Russia, could bave been listed among members of the Communist Party of Russia had they not already resigned from the CPSU. I think that two recent weeks have shown clearly that the party cannot be changed, cannot be made more democratic. This diagnosis was clearly irrefutable at the time the Russian Communist Party (RCP) was formed. The worst thing about it is that we have clearly overestimated the importance of those powers the CPSU agreed to give up. Even now the country's fortunes are being decided by the party rather than by voters or by the parliament. As we have heard at two recent news conferences, the President's sudden departure from the "500 Days" programme had resulted from the decision made by the party. Let's not go on and say that the President did no swear to be true to the Politburo. I don't think it is incidental that the news about the rejection of the "500 Days" programme has surfaced precisely now: while Gorbachev's wasting efforts to fight "the so-called democrats", "true Leninists" from the RCP attack him openly.

The leader of the RCP, Ivan Polozkov, spoke at the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in February 1991 thus starting a play to politically discredit Gorbachev. More recently, during the Plenum of the RCP, Ivan Polozkov's true followers stepped into the breach made by him. The strongest attacks came from two party officials in Leningrad—Yashin and Tyulkin. The latter hurled the most terrible, in the light of the latest party standards, insult, and equated General Secretary Gorbachev with Academician Shatalin.

Accounts of the Plenum of Russian communists are an interesting read but not recommended before going to sleep. As you read, you must constantly remind yourself what year it is today. The material speaks about "the ideological work of the party to fulfill its functions of educating the masses young and old" and "dissent agents" in the pay of the CIA...My God, how simple they make everything! Go on, live and implement plans while Polozkov and his comrades educate you and your children, and if you disagree, you are a CIA agent!

The party keeps records of all sorts of "agents". All are assigned special shelves and classified. A certain O. Kirillov, billed as an author (have any of you ever read his books?) described in detail his party comrades' titanic efforts. He singled out two "agents" for his analysis—Shatalin, allegedly recruited by the IMF (one wishes he were), and Arbatov, recruited by U.S. research centres. The author divided the rest into five groups, pointing out those "agents" who have broken off with Motherland, and those who have lost their way and ended up prisoners of the democrats.

The author thinks nothing of the fact that those who "have lost thousands, but in hundreds of thousands! Right before his addess, the Central Control Commission of the CPSU gave this figure: 1.3 million people (9 per cent of the membership) had stopped paying their dues without having formally resigned from the party.

I think that Brezhnev, Chernenko and those before them, would have felt at home in the Central Committee of the RCP. Because some of its members want to go back to old practices and because they openly take pride in what Leonid Brezhnev achieved. Second Secretary of the Central Committee Aleksey Ilyin does not seem to see anything wrong in our past: "Our opponents say that this (the country's economic and political situation—V.L.) is the result of past mistakes, but is it?" he said, during a

recent meeting with his voters. "I have examined all 1950-1984 statistics about the USSR and other countries. During those 34 years the average annual national income growth rates in the USSR were higher than in the U.S. and other Western countries. This is also true about the rates of growth of productivity, industrial production and even agriculture.

One can understand Ilyin well, as one can any other person who thinks kindly about his younger years even if they fell during the war or life in barracks conditions: yes, indeed people lived under Khrushchev on bread and beans, yes, they built an inhuman military machine and industry with semi-drunk workers under Brezhnev. But how sweet life was at that time especially for them, the apparatchiks!

The Central Committee of the RCP is increasingly claiming it has the right to defend the people and speak in their name. In this respect Polozkov is not original as were not all party functionaries before him. But one amendment dictated by the times ought to be made: as the country moves towards a market economy, the RCP is increasingly turning into a party of "noncovertible minority", a party of those who are losing their place in the administrative- system sun. And how they still want to bask in the sun...

Yeltsin, Silayev Explain Land Reformss

LD0304152291 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1200 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] It is well-known that the land reforms in Russia are progressing with difficulty. As a result, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and Ivan Stepanovich Silayev have today sent a telegram to the republics, krays, and oblasts of Russia in which the mechanism of land reforms is explained.

Government Amends Family Income Rules

LD0304172691 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] The Russian Council of Ministers has adopted a decision to abolish restrictions based on the size of the joint income per member of a family when establishing benefits for children from 1.5 to six years of age, compensation payments to families with young children in connection with the increases in prices for children's goods, and also monthly payments to children who do not receive pensions and benefits under the present system of social security.

Moscow Soviet Chairman Views Higher Prices

LD0304223791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Interview with Yu.M. Luzhkov, chairman of Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee, by correspondent V. Bakarinov; place, date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Bakarinov] In your view, in the view of the chairman of the Moscow Soviet Executive Committee, what awaits Moscow in connection with the price rise?

[Luzhkov] Of course, Muscovites are not happy, nor can they be, over the fact that they have encountered high prices. I think that the decision to raise prices is inevitable. Over all of the five- year plans, we worked in such a way and administered the state so badly that sooner or later, these discrepancies had to be put in order. And in this sense, the decision itself is a correct step. But I would like to note here that, well, in the first place, it could have been avoided if the government [upravleniye] of the country had been effective. The price rise has taken place. That is a forced measure. And the main thing which must be dealt with now by all of us is to provide the shop counters with goods. Measures are needed, special measures to increase commodity output. If we produce less and less goods, that will lead to a further considerable worsening of people's lives. I think there is a group of goods which demand an analysis once again and attempts must be made, all the same, to restore equilibrium to the possibility of buying goods and, accordingly, the possibility of producing and selling them. In the first place, this concerns children's things.

[Bakarinov] So, you mean that the prices which have been introduced, the new prices which have been introduced now cannot be final. Must they constantly be on the move, constantly be brought into line with commodity output?

[Luzhkov] I am simply convinced of this.

[Bakarinov] And are you personally more inclined to hold an optimistic view of the future, or a pessimistic one?

[Luzhkov] I think that one must be a realist, in the first place. Well, it is realism which is demanded of us now, the adoption of measures which should help the population in this situation.

'Russian Information Agency' Established

LD3003120891 Moscow All-Union Radio Second Program Radio-2 Network in Russian 1100 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] I am glad that Russia now has not only its own television and radio company, but also an information agency of its own. I think that its address and telephone numbers will be of interest to many publications and organizations, and especially to the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic's democratic press. The address of the Russian Information Agency is as follows: Moscow, 119021 Zubovskiy Bulvar, Dom 22/39. the fax number is: 2461018 or 2302477.

New Mordovian Premier Has 'No Clear Program'

PM0404144391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Apr 91 Union Edition p 3

["Direct Line" report by Valentin Razboynikov: "Premier Goes, Problems Remain"]

[Text] Saransk—At the Mordovia Supreme Soviet session V. Uchaykin, chairman of the republic Council of Ministers, was relieved of his post after submitting a personal application and also in connection with the crisis situation in the national economy.

A. Paulov, first secretary of the Kovylkinskiy party city committee, was elected as the new premier. Thus, after a lengthy struggle which at times went beyond the bounds of politics, there has been a change of leader. But in the meantime the problems remain. For example, the sowing campaign is drawing closer but the equipment is not ready for the start of the field work and there are no seed, spare parts, or fuel. Winter crops were not sown in the fall... Many industrial enterprises in Mordovia are on the brink of complete standstill. Almost all horizontal and vertical business production links have been severed.

Neither his electors nor indeed some local parliamentarians can understand what first steps the new chairman of the Council of Ministers—a veterinarian by training and a party worker by vocation—will take to revive the economy. In any case, he presented no clear program for getting out of the crisis at the session.

Adygey Autonomous Oblast Subordinated to Republic

LD0304152991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1400 GMT 3 Apr 91

[Text] Adygey Autonomous Oblast, which formed part of Krasnodar Kray, is henceforth transferred to the direct subordination of the power bodies of the Russian Federation. The announcement on this was made at a joint session of the presidiums and executive committees of the kray and Adygey soviets of people's deputies held in Krasnodar. The withdrawal from the composition of the kray has been done in accordance with the decision of the second congress of people's deputies of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. The participants in the joint session stressed that the most important task now is the preservation of economic and cultural links.

CSFR Deputy Premier Signs Accord, Departs

LD2703184291 Prague CTK in English 1515 GMT 27 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 27 (CTK correspondent)—Czechoslovak Deputy Premier Vaclav Vales ended his three-day working visit to the Soviet Union today and flew from Moscow to Prague. During his visit, made at the invitation of the Russian Government, he discussed with Russian representatives the development of economic relations with the Russian Federation.

Vales and Russian Deputy Premier Inga Grebysheva signed an intergovernmental agreement on trade, economic and scientific cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the Russian Federation. Czechoslovakia is the first country to sign such a contract with the Russian Federation. Vales discussed with Soviet Foreign Trade Minister Konstantin Katushev the obstacles hampering fulfilment of agreements signed between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union at the end of 1990. The scheduled meetings with Soviet Premier Valentin Pavlov and Russian Premier Ivan Silayev were cancelled because both officials were too busy with internal problems.

Western Republics

Minsk Rally Shouts Down Belorussian Premier

LD0404142591 Moscow TASS in English 1352 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Minsk April 4 TASS—Ten thousand people flooded the central square in the Belorussian capital Minsk today to demand the removal of the nation's top leaders in the wake of sweeping price rises this week.

The angry rally grew out of a spontaneous strike, which hit the Belorussian capital on Wednesday as workers pushed for doubled or even trebled wages.

They also demanded the abolition of the five-per-cent sales tax, recently introduced by President Gorbachev.

By 11:00 this morning the square of the republican government's building was packed by representatives of the striking staffs of the local motorbike and bicycle factory and tractor works, as well as doctors and students.

They used a monument to Soviet state founder Vladimir Lenin as a podium to proclaim their demands, which today were mostly political.

Almost every speaker demanded the resignation of the Valentin Pavlov federal cabinet and the Republican government, as well as Gorbachev and Belorussian President Nikolay Dementey.

After an hour of speeches, Belorussian Premier Vyacheslav Kebich attempted to address the rally as well. But people would not listen to him, drowning him out with chants and whistles.

"Together with trade unions, we are now trying to find a way to cushion the price reform. However, some demands to the Belorussian Government simply are unmanageable because we have to comply with laws passed by parliament," Kebich told TASS on the way to the Republican legislature.

He said he had intended to tell the same to the rally.

Kebich explained: "Tax rebates are outside our competence as the government cannot overrule parliament's

decisions. Wage increases, for their part, will mean cuts in many social welfare programmes."

"Moscow cannot help us in any way today," the Belorussian premier said. "We should do it ourselves, but the pile of problems cannot be resolved on the square."

"I think that factory staffs should name their representatives so that we can sit down at the negotiating table and hammer out a decision," Kebich said.

In the meantime, the Republican government was sitting to discuss the situation. A source who attended the meeting but wanted to remain unidentified told TASS unofficially that no specific decision had been reached by 14:00.

Meanwhile, speakers alternated with one another outside the government building, with many blaming Communists for all the problems.

IZVESTIYA on Protests

PM0404170791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Apr 91 Union Edition p 2

["Direct Line" report by Mikhail Shimanskiy: "Workers on the Streets"]

[Text] Minsk—Apparently, the Minsk working class does not intend to take the prices blow lying down. There was a spontaneous strike at the electrical engineering plant named for Kozlov.

The enterprise workers' demands are very specific. Market pay for market prices. The strikers at this enterprise were joined by workers at the automatic lines, gear wheel, and tractor plants. Thousands of people gathered on one of Minsk's main streets—Dolgobrodskaya. Representatives of the republic's government turned up to talk with them.

A calm discussion was difficult amid the incredibly charged atmosphere of passion and emotion. Therefore, representatives of the strikers and government sat down at the negotiating table. The workers put forward demands—first and foremost, higher pay. The abolition of the five-percent sales tax on all types of products throughout the territory of the republic. This demand, they said, was due to the grim consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in Belorussia.

The strikers expressed support for the miners and demanded the resignation of the USSR president and government, the dissolution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, and the holding of new elections on a multiparty basis.

The situation is extremely tense at Belorussia's industrial giant—the truck plant. Several thousand marchers from the truck plant were out on the streets early in the morning of 4 April.

Belorussian Premier Discusses Talks With Unions

LD0404192991 Minsk Domestic Service in Belorussian 1725 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] As Vyacheslav Kebich, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian Republic, stated, negotiations with trade unions are being conducted to find ways of lightening the (?burden) of the price reform. However, specific actions must be taken only as a result of the negotiations.

Increases in wages, lowering the price of food in workers' and students' canteens, and of goods for children, as well as other problems, were discussed at the meeting between the government and the leaders of the Minsk enterprises. Kebich expressed understanding for the demands made by the representatives of the working collectives, but the main problem is the difficulty in finding resources in conditions of the huge deficit in the republican budget. The result of the discussion and the decisions amde will be announced later.

'Independent' Belorussian Worker's Group Founded

PM0504142191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 3 Apr 91 Second Edition p 3

[BELTA-TASS report: "Protecting Rights"]

[Text] Minsk, 2 Apr—Independent Belorussian workers' organizations have banded together into the Belorussian Labor Confederation. Delegates to the new social association's constituent meeting were made up of representatives of strikers' and workers' committees and action groups.

The confederation's policy statement says that it will stand for democracy, progress, and the market. The organization's main aim is to protect the rights of working people.

Belorussian Trade Union Activists Arrested

PM0404105391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Item from roundup of IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, POSTFACTUM, URAL-AKTSEPT, REUTERS, and UPI reports: "Leaders of Workers' Movement Detained"]

[Text] On 27 March Mikhail Sobol, leader of the Belorussian Workers Movement, and Viktor Pulmanovskiy, activist of the Belorussian Workers Union, were arrested and taken in by the militia. They had been collecting funds to aid striking miners. The charge sheet recorded the confiscation of money collected totaling 1,077 rubles.

"It should be emphasized," Sobol declared, "that the arrest was made right after the end of television filming

by representatives of Belorussian television's popular youth program 'Krok'" ("Step"), POSTFACTUM has reported.

Vietnamese Delegation Visits Belorussia

LD0204214391 Minsk Domestic Service in Belorussian 1725 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] A delegation from the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, led by Le Quang Dao, chairman of the assembly, vice chairman of the State Council, and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, has been in Minsk for three days. It arrived in the USSR at the invitation of the Supreme Soviet. The delegation was accompanied by people's deputy Samsonov, deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Committee for Defense and State Security Issues.

On 30 March, the Vietnamese delegation was received by Nikolay Dementey, chairman of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] Supreme Soviet. During the conversation, held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, the guests were acquainted with the economic development of the republic in the conditions of a transitional period to a market economy and with the lawmaking activity of the Belorussian legislature. The leader of the Vietnamese delegation spoke about economic reform and the renovation processes taking place in his country. An interesting exchange of views on perspectives of future development and deepening of bilateral cooperation took place. Vyacheslav Kebich, chairman of the Belorussian SSR Council of Ministers, took part in the conversation.

Malofeyev: Belorussia Situation 'Explosive'

LD0104201391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1900 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Malofeyev, member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, first secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party Central Committee, described the political situation in Belorussia as explosive at a meeting with the population of regions in Gomel Oblast which suffered as a result of the disaster at Chernobyl Nuclear Electric Power Station. The leader of the Belorussian Communists said that concern for the people remains paramount in the work of Communists in the Republic.

Belorussian Writer Cited on Neo-Stalinism

PM0304132391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Apr 91 Second Edition p 7

[Unattributed report carried under the "Our People Talk About Us" rubric under the general heading "Opinion for Export"]

[Text] Interviews with the remarkable Belorussian writer Vasiliy Bykov have recently become rare in the Soviet mass media, observes DEUTSCHE WELLE. The reason for this is not just his illness, but also his radical pro-perestroyka stance. A DEUTSCHE WELLE staffer met with Vasiliy Bykov in Minsk and interviewed him.

Ostrovskiy: There is a lot of talk now about neo-Stalinists and conservatives having stepped up their activity and preparing themselves to launch a resolute offensive against the achievements of perestroyka.

Bykov: This threat is a very real one, because since the new short period of confusion these forces have finally grasped that the democratic forces are not at all as effective as they claimed at the very outset and that on the whole our democracy has not yet developed, taken shape, or—most importantly—found the support of the broad masses of the people; and for that reason it is very easy now, of course, for the Communist Party, which has never let go this power over the people, to carry out its aims of restoring what has been lost. And even among the broad masses of the people support for these conservative forces is very considerable in view of the failure of democratic institutions.

Dnestr Republic Creates Independent State Bank

PM0504121191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 4 Apr 91 First Edition p 3

[Report by Colonel N. Mulyar: "Dnestr People Have Their Own Bank"]

[Text] Tiraspol—The Dnestr Republic, which, as is well known, has been deemed unconstitutional, has started to operate its own state bank.

A resolution of the Dnestr Republic Supreme Soviet has ordered all organizations and enterprises on the territory of Left-Bank Moldova not to make payments from their income or profits into the budget of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova. And that, according to preliminary calculations, is a figure of about 250 million rubles.

In response the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova Ministry of Finances has decided to stop financing the production and nonproduction establishments, hospitals, schools, and kindergartens under construction in this region and also to stop the payment of pensions and benefits to citizens living on the Left Bank territory. At the same time the leaders of local financial organs and banks and the chairmen of rayon and city soviets have been asked to conclude an agreement on the retention of the existing financial and credit system and accounting through the end of the year. But no compromise has been found.

Accident Rumors at Rovno Nuclear Plant Denied

LD0404124791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1145 GMT 4 Apr 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Viktor Mazanyy]

[Text] Kiev, 4 Apr (UKRINFORM-TASS)—The civil defense headquarters in the town of Rovno [the Ukraine] has refuted rumors of a nuclear accident that supposedly

took place at the Rovno nuclear power station. As a result of this, many anonymous messages have been received by the town and oblast bodies of power. The impression is being created that this is being done deliberately, with the specific intention of causing panic and destabilizing the situation.

A representative of the Rovno town civil defense headquarters said on the oblast radio that the station is working under the usual conditions of secure operation. The UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent obtained similar information from workers at the Rovno nuclear power station.

Paper Apologizes for Citing Falsified Document

PM0404142991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 4 Apr 91 p 1

[KP INFORMATION SERVICE report: "Returning to Earlier Publication"]

[Text] On 23 March our newspaper carried a report by S. Romanyuk, our own correspondent in Lvov Oblast, entitled "One Article for All. And That the Sixth." It cited the text of a decision supposedly adopted by Chernigov Oblast and City Soviets last September: to suspend the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic Constitution on the oblast's territory, to ban all political organizations but the CPSU and the Lenin Communist Youth League, to arrest Rukh's leaders on the basis of lists drawn up by the KGB...

One month ago a photocopy of this "document," which bears the seal of Chernigov Oblast Soviet and, supposedly, the signatures of its leaders, was published in the officially registered newspaper NEZALEZHNIST (Lvov). Our correspondent also obtained a photocopy from hitherto reliable sources.

Following the report in KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, Chernigov Oblast Soviet categorically denied the "document's" authenticity, and the editorial office has no grounds for doubting that we really are dealing with an ordinary falsification, which today is increasingly frequently becoming a weapon on both sides of our political barricades." [quotation marks as published]

The editorial board has drawn the corresponding conclusions in respect of the employees who made the mistake.

We apologize to Chernigov Oblast deputies and also to all our readers.

Ukraine CP Conference Examines Food Problems

LD0104183191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1630 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Priority tasks for stabilizing and improving food supplies to the population of the Republic have been examined at a conference held today at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. A report was delivered by Gurenko, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the Ukraine Communist Party Central Committee. Analyzing the situation which is taking shape, which is fraught with serious social consequences, the participants in the conference were unanimously of the opinion that the Ukraine Communist Party could not shake off responsibility for the state of affairs in the economy and resolution of the food problem. The conclusion was clear: there has been enough talk about priority to development of the countryside, it must be implemented in reality.

Caucasus

Troops, Military Equipment Continue to Tskhinvali

AU0404154791 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1430 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] According to information received from the Press Center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Georgia, military equipment and internal troops continue to be brought into Tskhinvali from various regions of the country. Whereas before the equipment was brought in through the highway from Gori and (?Nikozi), on 3 April, four "Ural" trucks with servicemen arrived in Samachablo via the [name indistinct] pass and [name indistinct]. Ossetian extremists encouraged by the obvious support of the center again attacked Georgian villages. During the night of 4 April, they opened fire on the village of Nikozi in the Gori Rayon, and the village of Tamarasheni in the Tskhinvali Rayon was fired on with rockets. The barbaric actions of the Ossetian bandits are known. Unfortunately, some of our compatriots also turned out to be within their ranks. Zhora Zamkhuridze, nicknamed Gaga, a citizen of the village of Gudzhabauri, assumed the name of his wife [name indistinct] and took the side of the extremists. A few days ago, he and his accomplices caught Tamaz Zasvadze, a mentally ill resident of Gudzhabauri, near the entrance to Tskhinvali; the bandits subjected him to cruel violence and are still holding him. It must be pointed out that Tamaz Zasvadze is not only a fellow villager of Zamkhuridze but also his relative.

This morning it has been relatively quiet in Tskhinvali and neighboring villages.

Journalists Visit, Report on Tskhinvali

AU0404161391 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1430 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] It was an explosion at an enterprise manufacturing varnishes and dyes that welcomed the foreign, Soviet, and [word indistinct] Georgian journalists who arrived in Tskhinvali. A casual conversation was struck up with militiamen who stood near the post. According to them, the situation in Tskhinvali was quite unpleasant, in the sense that after the supposedly friendly recommendation by Lukyanov to President

Gorvachev with regard to the declaration of the state of emergency throughout the entire territory of the so-called South Ossetia, Ossetian extremists markedly recovered their somewhat lost fighting spirit. They marked the recommendation by shooting at and verbally threatening Georgians.

Today everybody expected an attack against the [militia] headquarters, but the commandant of the town used a little military trick: The Georgian militia was moved a little to the side and servicemen took their place. As a result, the Ossetian militants found themselves in an awkward situation; the attack had to be postponed until a better opportunity presented itself. The commandant of the town was away at that time—he was in Tbilisi. The duties of Tengiz Epitashvili were performed by lieutenant- colonel of the militia [names indistinct], chief of the Provisional Headquarters. The civilized and elegant manners of Mr. [name indistinct] made a pleasant impression upon the journalists who were present there.

TASS Updates South Ossetia Situation

LD0404213691 Moscow TASS in English 2055 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Vladikavkaz April 4 TASS—By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev: The situation in South Ossetia remains tense. According to reports supplied by the North Ossetian Interior Ministry to the press centre of the extraordinary committee under the chairman of the North Ossetian parliament, shooting was again heard around Tskhinvali last night. The warring side engaged in skirmishes for several hours. No losses have been reported.

More than 200 gravely injured people and refugees are now awaiting treatment in the regional hospital. The patients cannot be evacuated to Vladikavkaz for treatment as all the roads are blockaded by the Georgian side.

The economic blockade of Tskhinvali continues: Industrial enterprises, shops, public transport and communal services have been idle for four months. Electricity, gas and water supplies are sporadic. Food supplies are a problem. Humanitarian aid cannot reach Tskhinvali because of the roadblocks erected by Georgian militants. Bread, medicines, flour and fuel are delivered to the besieged city by helicopters.

The situation in Ossetian villages which have not yet been ravage remains unclear. Armed groups are in control there. According to reliable sources, Georgian militants continue to loot the nearly thirty Ossetian villages they earlier set on fire.

Tskhinvali inhabitants and refugees held a meeting, which urged the country's leaders to take urgent measures and have the USSR Interior Ministry troops help impose the state of emergency on entire South Ossetian territory.

Tbilisi April 4 TASS—By SAKINFORM correspondent Eduard Ediberidze:

Military equipment and USSR Interior Ministry troops from different regions of the Soviet Union continue to arrive in Tskhinvali. According to the press centre of the Georgian Interior Ministry, while earlier military equipment arrived along the motorway from the south, on Wednesday [3 April] truckfulls of servicemen arrived from the north across the Mamison mountain pass.

Ossetian militants attacked Georgian villages again. In the early hours of April 4 they opened fire at the village of Nikozi of the Gori district. Missiles were fired at the village of Tamarasheni in Tskhinvali district.

The Tskhinvali military commandant, Tenghiz Epitashvili said the build-up of interior troop potential in the region indicates that the state of emergency or presidential rule are likely to be introduced here soon.

The republican mass media carry numerous protests against the intervention of the centre in the internal affairs of sovereign Georgia republic.

Central Asia

Kazakh President Abolishes Certain Sales Taxes

LD0404150791 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1400 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] The next piece of news will doubtless gladden the people of Kazakhstan. Today Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of the Republic, resolved that the tax on sales of some consumer goods and certain types of services be abolished. They include meat and dairy products, fats, oil, bread and bread products, and baby food. Included in this category are some Soyuzpechat [Main Administration for the Distribution of Printed Matter] goods and postal services, and also goods manufactured by pensioners who are engaged in private work. The resolution helps to some measure the social protection of the population during retail price reform.

Independent 'Islamic Center' Set Up

PM0404145191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Aleksandr Ryabushkin report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Will Islam Help the Economy?"]

[Text] An Islamic Center has been set up at the constituent congress of Kyrgyzstan Muslims.

This religious public movement will operate in parallel with the republic's existing official religious organizations.

"Life itself forced us to set up a coordinating body capable of solving the pressing problems of our believers," so said republic People's Deputy

Sadykzhankhadzhi Kamalov, who has been elected president of the Islamic Center. "Compared with neighboring regions, Kyrgyzstan has lagged badly behind in the development of Islam and a host of unresolved problems have built up, while the existing religious associations (the councils of Islamic judges) are unable to meet Muslims' needs, there is a shortage of mosques, Muslim schools, and religious literature, and contacts with foreign Islamic centers are poor.

"We do not intend to oppose the existing Muslim organizations—on the contrary, we will cooperate and help one another. We have united aims. Without religion we will be unable to tackle many problems and will be unable to bring up people in a spirit of peaceableness and goodness.

"One of our prime tasks is to set up contacts with fellow-believers abroad and establish direct ties with Arab countries. We will seek to develop religious relations and help provide economic assistance to the republic."

Conference participants adopted the Islamic Center's statutes and examined a question on the movement's structures. Branches of the center will be set up in the oblasts and in a number of the rayons of the republic. It plans to publish its own newspaper.

'Cotton Affair' Accused Cleared

PM0304154591 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 2 Apr 91 p 1

[M. Alimov article: "The Cotton Affair": Can We Expect a Continuation?"]

[Text] Several thousand people were convicted in the so-called "cotton affair" in Uzbekistan, causing an uproar throughout the country. They were all indicted for taking part in the distortion of statistics. For some reason the people put behind bars were mainly team leaders, accountants, and raw-cotton inspectors, in short, the "small fry." A routine session of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet Presidium on 22 February, as the republic newspaper SOVET UZBEKISTON reports, examined 241 cases in the "cotton affair." The republic's Supreme Court cleared all these citizens and fully restored all their rights. Incidentally, over 1,600 people involved in the so-called "cotton affair" have now been rehabilitated in Uzbekistan.

Prices on Meat, Milk Lowered in Uzbekistan

LD0504162891 Moscow All-Union Mayak Network in Russian 1500 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] A TASS correspondent reports from Uzbekistan that prices have been lowered here. The price increases on a number of foodstuffs did not last in Uzbekistan for even a week. From 8 April new prices for meat, milk, and products made from them will be introduced in the Republic. They were established by a decision adopted today by the Uzbek Council of Ministers. So the maximum retail price for a kilogram of meat will be 7 rubles [R], for butter R10, and for one liter of milk R0.5. The decision demands that any attempts to raise prices too high should be decisively stopped, and that strict measures should be taken against offenders.